

DEWDROP'S CLASSPECT BROCHURE

(A [TRANSLATION OF/SOLUTION TO] THE HOMESTUCK CLASSPECT SYSTEM, FOR BOTH ARTICULATING SELF-REFLECTION AND PSYCHOLOGICAL UTILITY)

Q: tldr wtf is this

A list of personality types, 87.5% of which originate from the webcomic "Homestuck", intended to help people identify friends and themselves through predictable paths of trauma, ambition, and all the personal narratives we tell ourselves.

Q: a whatstuck

Homestuck is a webcomic primarily created by Andrew Hussie, which is about a couple dozen teenagers finding themselves and what they believe in (and brutally murdering betty crocker). Among the misadventures, a large crux of the comic is the two-part mix-and-match title system of Classes and Aspects assigned to the cast, abbreviated to "Classpects". This Noun-Of-Concept naming convention informs the mythological destinies and superpowers of its characters - and, unsaid but hard to ignore, their personalities. An online quiz was released under the brand known as "The Extended Zodiac", which provided official temperments for the Aspects among other things. The Classes, however, were left out. Initially, this document was simply meant as a meager companion piece that would add them back. Initially, anyways.

A piece of crucial context is that Homestuck itself did not fully explain this system as-introduced, alluding to key details and designations that were unsaid or misinterpreted by the expository characters. For years, during and after the comic's life, fans have tried to fill in the gaps themselves, but primarily through the (more than understandable) interpretation that this is nothing but idle theories towards a fictional magic system. No single correct answer can stand with the creator either being too attached to keeping elements mysterious, or perhaps never having a full picture themselves. There were a few public statements on what people got wrong, but little confirmation on what was right, creating a Wild West of mad theorists and viscous factionalism.

This 190+ page so-called-brochure is a product of that enviroment, motivated by the notion that Homestuck's Classpect system - even in its inaugural, fragmented state - appears uncannily precise in regards to real people and their paths through life. As such, rather than merely speculate what the author may have implied symbolically, or draw connections purely through the in-universe logic of the comic's world, this work assumed that Andrew Hussie was, instead, on to something, and codified these findings in Homestuck amidst its cosmic mythology and running gags. More than an interpretation of the Classpect system as-presented, this document regarded Homestuck as a convenient springboard, adherent first and foremost to real flesh and blood. Still, it would be impossible to deny the aspirations that these findings were, potentially, the correct missing pieces to the broken jigsaw puzzle Homestuck inflicted on the internet...

...And then Hussie released an official Class list that deconfirms just about all of it.

Q: wait so this is a bunch of outdated bullshit?

Yes and no. Kinda...It's complicated! Bear with me, will you?

I had my fun with the Classpect system as a teenager, back in the comic's hayday. I moved on, only learning it had ended long after the fact, deciding on a whim to see how it came to a close. I was mildly-to-moderately satisfied, discovered the Extended

Zodiac, and felt surprisingly *seen* by its results. Now, while I didn't click with the other potential answers it had, I figure, hey, it's just a web personality quiz, right? Dime a dozen, easy to prey on the guillible - stopped clocks. But, why not share it with some people I know? Why not watch if it gets a reaction out of them? Why not get a little curious at some *reoccurring* reactions, especially when contextualized with what I remembered of the Classes?

Sure, there were existing theories out there - big websites full of Class descriptions - but it always felt like the ones that had something were still shy of the real reasons people exhibit these behaviors. I couldn't sit idle, and wound up spending 6 years performing greenhorn psychoanalysis on anyone who would tolerate me, and quietly keeping notes towards those who didn't. Young and old, friends and strangers, rich and poor, close and foreign, typical or twisted, I delighted in seeking people out. Many people fit along the patterns I was compiling, and those that didn't were always worth interrogating twice as much. If there *was* something to this - something true to life and the people in it - then I had to see it hold up to pressure, and measure anything that looked like a curveball. I invited arguments from critics, implored my friends to not hold back, and incorporated everything that won me over. In the process, I made alot of enemies, but some good friends who are more than worth that, and a following I only hope I can live up to.

I think I got something with this. Something written not by Andrew Hussie, but, something deeper in our flesh. Truth in a heavier quality than what is only canon to Homestuck...but, there's no ignoring the text that set this in motion. While I was never shy about the prospect of diverging from Homestuck's material altogether, I found that the stories I was hearing were still echoed in the script printed years before. Even the controversial claim of two extra Classes had suspiciously apt applications to otherwise undesignated characters in the comic - so I would argue, and so I will later in this document. **Indeed, I will still stand by the claim that this work is contingent and compatible with the original comic of HOMESTUCK, from start to finish** - and even with the irreconcilability to Hussie's lore drop, there are elements of post-comic materials that still yet match to my understandings.

So the list of possibilities are thus:

- 1: Despite the diagnosis of British Columbia's mental health resources, I am either completely delusional (possible), or simply far too eager on pattern recognition (more possible), and have unknowingly manipulated everyone who has agreed with me (less possible).
- 2: Andrew Hussie genuinely did prototype a psychological framework inspired from other systems, and buried it into a work of fiction. However, they have enough idle malice to mislead their fans wrong answers, for one reason or another.
- 3: Andrew Hussie genuinely did prototype a psychological framework inspired from other systems, and buried it into a work of fiction. However, they and I are simply at odds as to the exact qualities of these personality types and their relationships to each other.
- 4: Andrew Hussie did nothing besides write a work of intentional fiction, but, whether due to its inspirations or pure coincidence, it requires very little alteration to align with patterns of real psychological phenomenon.
- 5: We are in the dream of a whale, and our perception of reality merely reflects the song of this is stupid.

Most of this doc was written with '2' in the back of my mind; knowingly unproven, granted, but still vocalized. A good deal of those sentiments remain. Some from being too lazy to change it, and some...well, it ain't conspiracy, so much as a hunch I can't shake. I wouldn't put it past the old guy, at least. But, to anyone reading this, you ought to come to your own conclusions. Take nothing on faith; if I have a point, I want you to recognize that yourself, with all your wits about you.

Q: this still sounds like hogwarts houses being taken very seriously

Hey, I get it. Let me be explicitly, unambiguously clear that I am *fully* aware of how utterly insane this venture looks - though how I make it *not* look like that to you, that's a tricky one. Hard to know what's convincing, and never to be underhanded about it. Sure, I've said what set me down this course, but, even if that sounds reasonable, what if I'm lying to you? What if I'm lying to myself?

Reiterating what's aforementioned, I did seek out a medical health professional outside of therapists, but was told that I had no signs of schizophrenia. Even with that, the doubts that I'm still making a mountain out of a molehill haven't left me, for all the years I've hammered away at this. What tempers those doubts and keeps me moving forward is those around me. A madness shared by two is one thing, but two dozen? Two hundred? I don't think I have the charisma to misdirect that many, and - for as much as this can be believed - I don't respect a friend who won't talk back to me.

I go by Dewdrop online, and while I am the only one with the keyboard writing the words you're reading, this text is as much my personal observations as the observations of those around me; of their quotes and confessions that ran in pattern, their own theories nursed as possibility, and their own counter-arguments that won me over. These are people of many different temperments and backgrounds, many more educated and worldly than myself, all of sane and sober (well, not always sober) mind. Any confidence read in my words is held together so much by what they've given me, and what I'll always be in debt to.

Still, while I'd argue my loudest detractors haven't read what I put down, I can't say none. I can't even blame the people who *don't* give this document a look. Personality typing overall is alot of easy answers even I don't agree with, fluid and applicable in a million situations. Personally, I think they're all bumping against shapes in the dark, closer to the truth than they might think, and that Hussie made their own conclusions that got further than most. What I've put down is a little controversial in "adding" (I retain some disputes) two extra Classes Homestuck didn't confirm, but 16 categories (or 32 - Prospit and Derse?) is a reoccurring number in a few systems; for one, eponymously.

Granted, I think those written descriptions still err on feeling too easily-applicable, too horoscopey...but I think what's here isn't, and I'm not the only one. I have done my level best to observe and record hard lines on what a person is and isn't - proper right and wrong answers. **I invite you, with an open mind and all your wits about you, to give it a shot.** If you're still hesitant, still unconvinced I'm not just here to prey on what you want to hear - **good**. In this position of double-fringe psychology, I would find it hard to trust myself in your position. I hope, at least, to earn that trust; I hope you start to see it with your own eyes, and don't need me at all.

Q: you really think a webcomic has more to offer than the consensus of actual psychologists who spent their whole lives on this?

Maybe not "more", but something different; in addition to, perhaps. I am fully aware of the claims I'm making, and while that puts me at odds with some of the proper eggheads out there, please don't read disrespect in that - even quips like "eggheads" are meant in good fun. The human brain is a fascinating thing that many people have spent their entire lives trying to untangle, and even if this back-alley-bootleg method really is correct, then there's still many nuances only known to, and secrets only to be discovered by, the real professionals out there. Classpects aren't everything after all - though I'd certainly say a solid chunk. Besides, it wouldn't be

the first time some wild development of science came from an unlikely source, would it?

Q: ...from the story with a character explicitly named "troll will smith"?

Candidly, I think I've a more convincing argument on any of this by minimizing dwelling on the absurdity of what set this in motion; so to say, that it was more effective an argument blind, before telling people if it was coke or pepsi. Earlier versions of this document were much more brief on explaining what Homestuck was in the first place. It was more effective, but, perhaps less "fair". Not saying I wouldn't still prefer you skip ahead a little, mind you.

I can't humour those who write Homestuck entirely off as a nonsense shitpost, corruptive and caustic to deeper analysis. At the same time, I also wouldn't be caught dead being misconstrued as some zealot here to worship a webcomic as a bible. I am under no illusions to Homestuck's many shortcomings, nor Andrew Hussie's character flaws and resulting public spectacles. The comic is messy, and many of its elements work against each other - but I stand by there being a clear difference between when that's clumsiness and when it's intentional.

There are some poignant moments in the comic regarding the failure of expressing oneself emotionally and artistically, undone by cynical irony or idle ignorance. There are deep cuts to history and philosophy that you don't get from google searching on a whim. There are so many instances of Hussie decrying themself as a pretentious hack - subtly or as explicit text. I don't know the guy personally, but even without going full parasocial psychoanalysis (yet), is it really *that crazy* to think that if they *did* find a substantive evolution on psychology, between all the Carl Jung and other eggheads they read on, they wouldn't be the type to scream it from the rooftops without plausible deniability that's what they're even doing?

I won't say I still don't feel a little crazy, mulling it over. Sometimes it's harder to tell if "Hussie secretly knows" or "The system only works by pure coincidence" is the crazier option to consider. But, no matter which, I'm of the opinion that you can't measure the truth in terms of aesthetic. Or cringe.

Q: am i going to get anything out of this if i still don't buy into the "real world psychological model" stuff?

Can't say I made it with that consolation prize in mind, but people tell me this has helped them with character writing, measuring the arcs of fictional characters, or just felt a little more snazzy than the official word on Classpects. Hell, some people don't believe it's real in any genetic reality, but that is, at least, a useful framework to apply to their own emotions and self-image; a sentiment popular amidst other Classpectors, that I shouldn't be surprised it persists even when not openly invited. While I won't back down from my wilder claims, I can't and won't stop anyone from taking those more modest routes.

Really, if "Double Death of the Author" can get passed around as "fanfic that's still a better ending to Homestuck", than maybe I've got some ground to stand on as "wacky theory that's still better answers to Classpecting".

Q: can't you at least make these classes compliant with homestuck canon? just tweak the descriptions and swap the pairs?

I genuinely cannot. My understanding of these classes places great emphasis on what they are in relation to each other; Tiers of Intensity, exact Pairs, pseudo-pairs I call "Rivals", and *especially* everything I have to say about Inversion later on. Nominal surface elements of inflection and routine are one thing, but the deep bones of a Class - in philosophy and purpose - follow a rather rigid set of patterns. So to say, all of them are load bearing to the others, and sturdy in their individual descriptions for the same reasons. Part of why "Hussie is hiding something" still nags at my head more than "Hussie and I saw it differently" - but hey, who knows?

Q: say i hypothetically haven't read homestuck. wouldnt this just be too confusing without it as background knowledge?

I'll admit it would help, but I'm quite certain this document still functions otherwise.

The text in this font (that you've been reading thus far) will be more personal, openly acknowledge theories and guesses I'm not as firm on, and point to potential references as demonstrations of Classes, including Homestuck itself. Amidst the many reasons to do this, it sections those prerequisites off in mercy to anyone else.

The text in this font is more strict as the main body of the document, in confident assertions and without asides. I recognize this document is 50% asides, but the other 50% is a solid backbone that should do its job independently.

statement: people are more complicated than all this

Question: Is it so morally important that they are?

I've seen this system demonstrate a remarkable capability to whittle people's philosophies to inarguable cores, ascertain what secrets and complexes they're predisposed to hide from people, and predict their paths for development and downfall. There's a math to it all - a flat math of reoccurring conniptions, reoccurring imagery, reoccurring catchphrases - that holds up past so many doubts. I've seen people flustered and off-balance, taking the argument of "It couldn't be true" from dismissal to a moral stance; an existential fear of what a cliché it would reduce them to.

To those who feel defensive, I say: cheer up, and don't get your knickers in a twist. The expression of these categorized impulses - the political leanings, degree of obsession, how much or little charisma we muster - those can all vary and change over time, as we really do develop as people and learn from our mistakes. I'd say with confidence that the most distinct archetype qualities come from those who refuse to grow up or leave their echo chambers, even if the fundamentals don't seem to shift.

Ironically, I think the notion of a lifetime in eternal Tabula Rasa/wet concrete feels a bit stifling. If you think everyone's plastic, then you think your own range of plasticity is universal, you know? Doesn't leave much room to empathize with the truly alien - and puts those weirdos in the position of eternally wondering if they *want* to be weird, or do they just suck at being normal? Sometimes, it's just comforting to have the choice removed. I hear that's a common sentiment in the BDSM scene.

Q: back up, you're not the only one with ideas on classpects. who else is there?

Oh there's plenty. Back in Homestuck's hayday you'd be hard pressed not to trip over someone's write-up on how they saw the system. Some of those fossilized blogs still exist, but others are up in smoke. Even today, I'm *far* from the only game in town.

(<https://medium.com/@RoseOfNobility/the-tricksters-are-peachy-yaldabaoth-racial-identity-and-gnostic-existential-horror-7907191c8071>)

One is commonly known as optimisticDuelist, or sometimes revolutionaryDuelist, or utopianParadoxist, or whatever it might be now. They worked on a many theories and written essays regarding Homestuck, with their own take on Classpects interwoven in so much. Their see-saw model is inspired, and many other fan models seem to base off of it - even I invoke it early in this document, with my own adjustments. I found their work interesting, though, adherent to the view of "Yaldabaoth material/physical reality = evil" past observing Homestuck's depiction and, more of their actual philosophy. Which I disagree with. There were other criticisms I had (amidst what I found genuinely interesting), but with some of their blog posts being deleted, and my own memory being affected lately, I'm at a loss. I'm sure only Homestuck veterans will be able to trace what connective tissue I adopted, consciously or otherwise, and what shadows I jump at in moments of defensiveness.

(<https://dahniwitchoflight.tumblr.com/post/148033193047>)

I was made aware of Dahni after the fact. Fairly popular. But the reads on what any Classpect would be like personally feel inaccurate to what I know. The characters in Homestuck itself have provided fascinating mirror images to people in my life, especially to the explicit dittos of Class AND Aspect...but, Dahni picked a different end of the stick than I did.

(<https://homestuckexamination.tumblr.com/post/168160703234/homestuck-mythological-class-quiz>)

This blog really hit something for me. It felt like someone was properly on to something, and I was inclined to default to it...but, there were just enough things that nagged at me that I got twitchy, and started work on this garbage. I found it too mystical in certain places, and in others, simply failing to acknowledge the real complexities of why certain Classes are what they are.

(https://ouroborista.neocities.org/articles/Treatise_on_Classpecting.pdf)

More than the content and claims of the document itself, I highly respect the moxie Ouroborista displays in "A Treatise on Classpecting". I discovered them after I had already floated my own prototypes out into the wild, and if I had found them sooner, I might have been dissuaded from this utterly inane road I've taken. Cognizant of the missteps of so many theorists, Ouroborista concludes, as I have, that the information in Homestuck is not enough on its own to complete a Classpecting system. Where we differ is that while I am interested in a biological compulsion *to* rationalize, and thus, defer to flesh over Homestuck, Ouroborista instead appeases the rationalizations itself; the Treatise promotes a strategy of assessing one's own life story and what narrative the individual feels both has been foisted upon them, and what they wish for. It's amusing how often this arrives at the same individual conclusions I would have, but the Treatise never commits to calling Classpects anything objective; in another video, they say "This guide aims to help people assign these titles to themselves and others for the purpose of roleplay, introspection, or just plain fun". It ties Homestuck's threads together, completed and resolved, sealing the box shut and moving on.

I envy them.

Their words on how Classes that "Destroy their Aspect" are still fixated *on* that Aspect and not simply the reverse Aspect is, I find, true to life. Their descriptions to the behavior of most of these Classes ranges from in the right ballpark or adjacent

to my own conclusions. Yet, while some of the the fictional characters they choose as Class depictions are ones even I chose, others I find completely alien, and could provide lengthy descriptions of why I believe them to be examples of behaviors found in different Classes. Actually, I suppose I'm about to do just that, aren't I?

Again: Ouroborista correctly recognizes that there is simply not enough evidence in Homestuck itself to have one, single, correct theory. They say, without ambiguity, that there isn't one - but that doesn't sit right with me. The system (according to me (and some other shmucks)) works, and if it does, then Hussie only observed what the human genome actually wrote. While Homestuck and it's spin offs may be major sources for me, the absolute standard is the real people I've met: young and old, rich or poor, fans or strangers, I've done my best to have a large sample size and corroborate with others. Do not mistake any of my criticisms and conflicts with Ouroborista to be anything less than genuine respect to someone who clearly put alot of work in. I just don't think they want to investigate the potential of what they're really playing with. What they have is a compelling, inspiring system to address your faults and recognize your strengths...but I'm in this for results first, and healing second.

Q: okay so how are you gonna prove this

3 paragraphs going over the qualities, one each for a binary variation of flavour per Class, some poetry, 3 more for some inversion shadow self bullshit, and then a whole section for context sensitive cross-examinations. I'll also include anecdotes, as mentioned, along with media examples that I think work well as Class examples, but only in this style of text; a distinction between what I would say as some would-be professional, and all that feels more meandering and candid.

Overall, the goal is to paint a visceral picture that rhymes with your own independent memories and observations; that you will see yourself and your family amidst these colourful synopses. A descriptions of who they are is one thing, but predictions of what they've done and said behind closed doors, when you weren't in the room, or what they *will* discover about themselves later, is the kind of bullseye I'm aiming for. One that, hopefully, should earn some credibility to this text.

Q: your plan to make a webcomic personality system sound legitimate is to list your favourite TV characters?

There are numerous ways to discuss examples of Classes in this impersonal format, but they all have their drawbacks. Obviously I hope the plain text does enough to conjure images and evoke old memories that you can piece together yourself, your friends, and family. Our real relationships and experiences are the most important foothold in spotting these patterns in others - and, on that note, I will try to mention my own experiences with people. Not all of these are so explosive or vivid; some could go no further than "I knew a guy like this, moving on". Others are just...more personal, where even if the drama is good data, I have reservations about putting it into public display. What personal stories I share are, for one reason or another, ones I can live with.

On those same points, I'm against discussing celebrities or famous historical individuals, as while they ARE real people that the masses are familiar with, and I've DEFINITELY made my judgements privately amongst friends, it's...just, offputting to me. It's prying too far on people with enough of a spotlight already, and it certainly feels like a recipe of disaster if I get anything wrong too. I have only one exception, but that's for the end of the document - and, in my defense, one featured as a character in Homestuck already.

Fiction is tentative. Now so long as people try to write believable characters that we are meant to empathize with, it's inevitable that it will at least *stumble* in the direction of this already existing framework of personality. But there are no hard ceilings in fiction, which can lead to blurry chimeric patchworks of multiple Classes, or Classes so boxed into a corner from public perception that it's hard to disentangle it as anything other than a stereotype - or insult. I will name quite a few characters, and while it's inevitable that this will reflect on my narrow field of interests, I am trying to pick those that are, at least, never more than a quick internet video away from understanding their "vibe". If I pick them at all, I am asserting that they are at least *adequate* in mirroring the wants, whims, dreams, and fears of the very real human beings I'm focusing on. In a vacuum, this makes it an approach with no downsides, but this document must unfortunately argue for its own legitimacy alongside the would-be academia, and that puts a hard cap on how many times I can rant about a cartoon you've never heard of.

Q: also back up did you say poetry

I won't pretend some parts aren't for me. Still, the origin was practicality; I was trying to close out entries with some musings on the mythological title. Someone I showed it to (who is, admittedly, a fuckass), said it made it all more confusing that this was supposed to be about real people. Not wanting to overhaul the structure or naming conventions, I just doubled down on the esotericism, serving the emotional purpose I wanted it to have while leaving better descriptions like these to frame things. There were alternatives, but...like I said, some things are just for me. And there will be (or is) a version of this document that does not include them. Still, for parts of ourselves so important to art and meaning, built from a comic that celebrated that, it does not feel entirely out of place to wagger some of my own work.

Q: what's the point?

Whatever you want; we're whittling down and highlighting the impulses of what individual people consider artistically and spiritually resonant. I'd argue it's about empowering the voice of an individual's creative spirit, while making them more resilient to hard times and trauma that may have influenced them. I am, however, predisposed to believe things like that, so your mileage may vary. I will make judgements based on the basic principles of "Be excellent to each other", "Treat people the way you want to be treated", and "Labels that point out bad habits should have us reconsider bad habits and not labels".

Q: can classpects change?

Outside of Inversion (which we'll get to!), not that I've seen - but, people certainly do. Classpects are a foundational blueprint, a rhyming throughline, and little else. Indeed, it's all increasingly difficult to type people the older they get. Sure digging to that center, you can make some awfully accurate guesses on what they were like when they were younger, but that ought not to devalue all a person has decided above such things.

This also isn't as noble as some people make it out to be. Classpects kinda...suck? Whether they're real boxes our personalities fit into, or I'm mad and trying to *artificially* box people's personalities into them, why do you just want another box? Break loose. Get wild. Live life. Don't overthink a few syllables.

Partially on the same note, I don't recommend trying to "purposefully embody" your Classpect, and break something important in all that phillisophical incest. The entire

reason it's worth talking about is that you don't have to force it. There's a familiar pattern I've found in people overthinking what their title is and, after a certain point of natural maturation, finding themselves derealized from all they associated as their Classpect - downstream, maybe, but fleeting symptoms compared to the root. Likewise, this also results in failing to recognize all the ways their fresh new skin resembles what was shed. Failing all of that, there's the the depressingly common situation of people simply not liking what they see in the mirror, and making it my problem.

Any pontifications I might make on the inescapable nature of Classpects - be that terrifying or beautiful - are simply my own habit of settling with the world as it is. If that's not the case, all I lose is routine, while I adapt to new rules of the world. Should there be some combination of hard drugs, brain surgery, and electrocution that can scramble our defaults, you can expect an entire step-by-step guide in the next edition. As it stands, I hope anyone recognizes my own attempts to break fate, urging readers to be lucid to their own cliches.

Q: the comic says some are gender specific. what are you saying?

First and foremost, before all else: **trans rights are human rights**. Secondly, I'm non-binary, so I've got skin in the game on this. Thirdly, it is my professional stance (in as much professionalism as I can muster) that the door is open on anything, and I do not have the resources to say a Class is AMAB or AFAB exclusive in any conclusive fashion. Still, with all that in mind, I'd ask that you take me in good faith when I say that all but two Classes appear linked to birth gender in every case I've seen, and persist through transitions, hormones or not.

I'm not a fan of that. It wasn't what I was hoping for. When I began this fool's errand, I went in with the assumption that gendered Classes were bullshit, and made guesses free of any of its considerations. But you keep marking Classes, and learning about what you have, reconsidering previous labels...and even if the door is open, it's hard to ignore the cobwebs. Gendered Classes are still bullshit, but my arguments on *why* are positioned so it won't *matter* whether an exception to sexed Classes ever manifests. I still meet hopefuls, and despite my own hopes, I never seem to have the words they want to hear. I recognize what it looks like I'm doing, but for whatever my word is worth, I promise you there's no dogwhistles here.

Again, if I can be clear: **trans rights are human rights**, and I have no patience for anyone who wants to make an argument on "gender essentialism", let alone what this all means to it. Every argument made from the progressive voices who are much smarter than I am already stands above anything I go over here. Trans women are women, trans men are men, non-binaries are whatever they want, sex isn't gender; ergo, trans people are not invalidated by gendered Classes, gendered Classes are invalidated by trans people.

I believe this. I do. I also hope I can reach to progressive voices who still haven't swallowed "your permanent personality foundation is distractingly likely to be attached to your AGAB" - because I get it man, I don't think there's *any* good way to say that. Again, I'm NB, and while that doesn't absolve me of any accusations of hypocrisy, I have to insist I am at this position from these observations and not my morals...because those morals are *very directly pointed* at equality and accomodation. It is inconvenient to some of the arguments one has to make for human dignity, but it isn't irreconcilable. If we reject it on the principle that Tabula Rasa *sounds* better, then we only make facts into shackles, and give ammunition to our enemies. There are trans people who will belong to AMAB or AFAB Classes and display those attributes, and I don't want to see some conservative shithead able to point those traits out (whether they're aware of this system or not) while the opposition sticks their head in the dirt and says there's no such thing.

Look, maybe I'm wrong - maybe the doctors failed and I really *am* crazy -, but even in this nebulous system, there's more than enough to validate queer lives rather than invalidate. It would all be a lot to go over now, so, I'll include some more thoughts at the end when everything's already been discussed. Please have some faith that, despite what might be implied on a surface reading, the actual details of this document do not codify a binary of "male" and "female" personalities; if anything, it's a silver bullet to kill everything we ever assumed was such entirely.

Q: is it possible there are exceptions to these gendered classes and-

Sex isn't gender. There are no gendered Classes, and there never should be.

Q: is it possible there are exceptions to these sexed classes and you just haven't met them? or just mistyped them as something else (possibly from your own bias)?

Yes. It's possible. All I've got to offer is the best I've got, and the assurance that when people mention they found an exception, I try to meet these cases with an open mind every time. Still, if you read that admission of fallibility and feel something spring in your heart, saying "So there is hope!" or some other cheer, I implore you to ask yourself: was there not any if I'm right? Is the dignity of queer lives totally unsalvageable under these presumed circumstances? I don't think so, and I stress that more and more the longer I do this without finding that unicorn.

If nothing else, the main body of the work does not mention these elements. The focus is in providing an accurate description of the personality types without a gendered leaning; be that for trans identities, or that hypothetical unicorn out there. If I ever meet one, I'll log it next to the others, and bump the list of sex-neutral Classes from 2 to 3. Even if that reached all 16 14, there is no victory to be won that cannot already be eked out now.

Q: why is this so long

Price of being thorough. The human brain is - even abridged - a complicated thing.

Q: this is word soup. hire an editor

Only if this all hits the big leagues - which is a big "If", but not impossible. If it came to pass, certainly, I would defer to experts. As it stands, not only can I not afford one, what's here alone has its own value, in a way I'd preserve alongside whatever follows. This document has clinical priorities first, but it does still qualify as a manifesto. Quite a lot of personal confessions are woven in here, both in trying to capture something visceral, and some selfish want for expression.

Q: a lot isn't a word

Personal flourish.

Q: you're using semicolons too much

I like them.

Qcont: and incorrectly

Your mom.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

(A THREE-POUND PILE OF DREAMS)

As a quick primer, it should be noted that this document works best consumed from start to finish. While all of it intends to paint a vivid picture of what these personality quirks and catalysts are, and certainly *can* accomplish this in a vacuum, its most convincing argument comes from how the individual sections compare to the rest; which traits are magnifications of what came before, the direct mirrors, the greater symmetries between the different “trees”, etcetera. Make of that what you will.

TABLE OF CONTENTS (p. 11) - You are here.

INTRODUCTION AND ESSENTIALS (p. 14) - Just what it says.

ASPECTS (p. 18) - A list of 12 abstractions; infinite in potential, but irreconcilable with the other 11 flavours of infinite.

ATTUNE/ADAPT (p. 28) - A brief explanation of how Classes build off of each other, and one way of conceptualizing this 4x4 system.

AN APOLOGY IN ADVANCE (p. 29) - I don't twist the knife; I cauterize.

PROPHETS - A dignified modesty, embraced or encouraged.

1. MAGES (p. 30) - Stoic loners very preoccupied with the notion of self-sufficiency. Means to do good, but only in their way. Unhelpful otherwise. Rarely compromises.

2. SEERS (p. 33) - A free agent with a fixation on social awareness, always trying to nudge people to make the smart decision. Guilty for when they themselves don't.

MAGICIANS - Fake faces. Who people need them to be. Better that way.

1. WITCHES (p. 37) - Playful teasing and individuality. Contextually helpless. Romanticizes their failures. Lets bigger voices do their fighting for them.

2. HEIRS (p. 41) - A reliable, friendly face to turn to. Always trying to meet others expectations. Convinced everyone needs their sole input, and not the other way around.

TIER 1 RIVALS: PROPHETS AND MAGICIANS (p. 44) - "Quiet" doesn't mean "simple". Sometimes, it doesn't even mean "quiet".

SERVANTS - Theatric bluster. Hard work by the book. Rigid guilt.

1. PAGES (p. 46) - Self-admitted failure aspiring to be so much more. Wilfully naive. Guilty schemer. Attracted to eccentric formal wear.

2. KNIGHTS (p. 49) - Professional best buddy. Many bitter self-imposed rules they don't share. Tends to purposefully annoy people, but lash out at being taken for granted.

OUTLAWS - Happiness is right there. Just take it. Don't stick around.

1. THIEVES (p. 53) - Smarm and snappy comebacks. The world did them dirty. Toughened them up - or just made them bitter. A competitive pride.

2. ROGUES (p. 56) - Always chipper, not always sure why. Wants their friends to be happy, finds the shortcuts there. Will suddenly abandon said friends without explanation.

TIER 2 RIVALS: SERVANTS AND OUTLAWS (p. 59) - Far less a comparison of what they do, compared to all the familiar frustrations of coming up short in the same contests.

FAE - Aggressive enthusiasm. Maybe too aggressive. Can't stop won't stop.

1. MAIDS (p. 61) - Wild, impulsive, productive. Bluntly condescending, moves on. Trusts intuition over experts. A thin line between dignity and totally unhinged.

2. SYLPHS (p. 64) - Springs surprises on people they never asked for. Snippy when people don't go out of their way for them. Something sharp behind the smile.

ROYALS - Unabashed cynicism, here to tell you why you're wrong.

1. PRINCES (p. 67) - A hundred varying personal explanations of their character that never quite outrun the single reduction of “uppity snob who hates themselves”.

2. BARDS (p. 71) - Casual philosopher. Poor work ethic. Plays a clown to hide how out-of-their-depth they are...or admits it transparently, helpless to their inability to shut up.

TIER 3 RIVALS: FAE AND ROYALS (p. 74) - Insanity without absolutes is a touch more endearing. The brief surfacing of “What the fuck am I talking about?”

MASTERS - Unshakeable faith in how the world works, and who it favours.

1. LORDS (p. 76) - The ultimate winner, scholar, warrior, or victim - so they say, undone by the details. Brash and heavy handed, unsubtle in rationalizations. Slave to optics.

2. MUSES (p. 80) - Shy and quiet, poetically misfortunate. Genuine self loathing maladapted to manipulation, gripping souls to a tune of “i am very wittle uwu”.

TIER 4 RIVALS...? (p. 83) - The ones you can’t ignore, and the ones who were never spoken.

INTERMISSION (p. 84) - You ain’t seen nothing yet.

INVERSION (p. 85) - Of course humans aren’t only one thing forever until they die. Little good comes of trying to be.

INVERSION CONT: QUICK GLOSSARY OF TERMS I MADE UP (p. 86) - There’s a particular lingo to this area that’s best to address.

INVERSION CONT 2: ASPECT AKIMBO (p. 88) - The Aspects with greater context in their relationship to each other, and potential for transformation.

TIER 1 INVERSION: FATE AND FREE WILL (p. 94) - Taking stock of what’s so easily dismissed.

TIER 2 INVERSION: BONDS AND LIBERATION (p. 98) - The obvious answers that were never “failure”, but rather, necessity.

TIER 3 INVERSION: MIRACLES AND SCIENCE (p. 102) - Maybe two extremes in dogma can cancel themselves out, and free the individual chained to both.

TIER 4 INVERSION: HEAVEN AND EARTH (p. 106) - An insufferable cliffhanger.

DISCREPANCIES (p. 108) - Sorting through what Classes may resemble others, alongside highlighting the range of variations in the process.

DISCREPANCIES CONT: DISCREPRINCES (p. 131) - A particularly argumentative lot.

THE FINAL TWO CLASSES (p. 140) - A million masks over a shameful emptiness.

FINAL TWO CONT: IDENTIFICATION (p. 140) - The thing about spotting shapeshifters is that no one else *can* shapeshift, and these two can't *stop*.

1. CLASS #15 (p. 141) - Mighty ambitions, but few ideas on how to get there, or even enough enduring conviction. Plastic and malleable, but a bitter empty underneath it. Prone to wild explosions of temper that betray the root.

2. CLASS #16 (p. 162) - “How To Live A Correct Life”: in rigid specificity, flippant whim, or scornfully saying that only fools try. An unstable ego tended imperfectly, affecting the ability to heal and teach. Desperate to make it work...or openly resigned to belligerence.

CONCLUSION(S) (p. 178) - The end of the explicit use of the document.

LIFE OF THE AUTHOR (p. 180) - A wild stab in the dark.

GENDER (p. 183) - Responding to the allegations.

COMMENTS, CRITICISM, AND CORRABORATION (p. 186) - Feedback from those I can wrangle or find. You want your words in there, contact me and it will make it in the next update. My discord is “dewdr0p”, but if you know me anywhere else, that works too.

SOME WORDS IN CLOSING (p. 198) - Just what it says.

INTRODUCTION AND ESSENTIALS (FRONTIER PSYCHOLOGY)

Welcome to the Brochure. Here's what will be covered.

Classpect: In the simplest terms, a Classpect is a foundational catalyst of a human personality, establishing many of our chronically perceived obligations, aspirations, and conniptions. The name combines “Class” and “Aspect”, to which there are 16 Classes and 12 Aspects, which can manifest in seemingly any combination therein. The possibility of gradients, or the ability to change Classpects, will not be ruled out entirely, but will not be dwelled upon. Classes, Aspects, and combinations thereof are not an “opt-in” theatre archetype, to be confused with the faces we may wear in different contexts, or even a vague judgement of our vibe or deeds. This document will insist that Classes are a material, tangible thing, and that any truth in the system is likely already present (in at least some regard) in existing psychological frameworks and fact.

Again, I’m not very optimistic on the matter of middle-ground and exeptions. Probably best not to treat it as an “optimism” thing anyways - is what it is.

Also, I am not batting for legitimacy on actual zodiacs. Even if any amount was true (and that is a CONTENTIOUS fucking argument for alot of people), it’s the bottom of the barrel next to all the other stuff we’re talking about.

Aspects: The delicious contrasting flavours of “what the world is all about”, 12 in total. On it’s own, this will likely seem harder to assume legitimate than the rest, but it makes more sense to address this first before we tackle Classes. Aspects are the elements (figuratively speaking; this is simply brain chemistry) Classes engage with, with so much philosophy built from their cultivation and combination. While everyone is capable of conceptualizing, appreciating, and believing in any Aspect, one is “bound” to you, and this unsolicited favourite is likely already the backbone of how you justify your place in the world, or the world itself.

Classes: The meat of this document. Classes are the most immediately recognizable parts of both Classpect descriptors, and, in turn, the personalities we meet in our day to day. In the broad strokes, Classes create an immediate “type” of a person, which we can often recognize, but easily shrug off as coincidence, contextual states of confidence, or outright pathologies. While this document will not rule out the possibility of Classes not being permanent, it will go forward with the (not unfounded) assumption they are. On the nature of pathology, there are certainly enough contradictions to write off that personality disorders are 1-1 matches for any of these. Public perceptions of any number of mental disorders can often be misattributed to Classes, who can ultimately manifest with any combination of them, or none. Also relevant, it should be noted that the Classes depicted here are born from a first world, western perspective, aiming most at the experiences/attitudes of 15-30 year olds. Different people in different places at different ages will all have incentive to manifest their Class with variation...though, again, it still seems to be a permanent undercurrent, no matter how much or little we pile on top of it.

There are 16 Classes, of which this document will provide descriptions of 14 initially, addressing the last two only after all the finer details are handled. Every Class is defined by a **verb**, summerizing (again, *summerizing*; the actual details are more complicated) how they relate to their Aspect, and frequently how they will wield that in the grand effort of helping themselves and/or helping their friends. On that note, Classes have several modifiers: “Active” and “Passive” Classes (to which there is always a pair), tiers of intensity, and a “Sway”. Here is a brief description of each, but it should make more sense in practice (really, most of this will):

Active and Passive: The ways a Class “**verbs**” their Aspect come in two flavours per verb, depending on whether the perspective is locked solo or socially. This means that any verb is shared between two different Classes, who often compliment each other in these shared innate values. Despite what the terminology might suggest, this has nothing to do with willpower, prescence, or anything else in the realm of ‘gusto’. Indeed, Passive Classes can find alot of forward momentum *precisely from* disregarding their own needs, self-sacrificing for the sake of the group...or, at least, what the Passive Class *assumes* the group wants or needs. Likewise, Active Classes can be reclusive, or even wither when convinced they aren’t living up to (or *can’t* live up to) the self-image their brain has mythologized. If this feels a bit reductive to the human experience, please hold your criticisms until after the **Inversion** section.

-Active Classes are not inherently selfish, but they certainly have the most verbose arguments to justify - or disguise - such. Their central calling is personal, drawn to any mix of self-actualization, self-sufficiency, self-aggrandizing, self-pity, or self-loathing; the obvious constant is, of course, the “self” part. Whatever good deeds Active Classes may accomplish, a pride in *being the guy who does them* is non-negotiable. For this reason, burdens or outright martyrdom are never an entirely selfless affair, compelled to spin poetry around the purpose of it; a bittersweet taste that still sates one’s hunger. Likewise, while uplifting those around them is never off the table for any of the Active Classes (despite some differing incentives to do so), advice they give tends to veer into projection; be that “be more like me”, or “be a better version of me that I cannot attain”. In some awful cases, this can devolve into preaching personal anecdotes that suffocate rather than inspire, unable to escape one’s own ego. With all of this in mind, it’s important for Active Classes to find peace of mind on their own terms before they go looking for it in outside validation - where it is, by definition, not to be found.

-Passive Classes are not inherently selfless, and even the most sincere aspirations to be so will be tangled by the inherent paradox of their existance. Primarily, yes, Passive Classes have a central calling concerned with the wants and wills of others, where their own self-identity sways

between “vehicle for the betterment of those I care about”, or “careful navigator amidst the wild wills of others”. Empathy and observation (real or imagined) are core skills underlying the nominal outline: a healer, a caretaker, a leader, a mentor, a protector, a human footstool, or just a loyal friend. The first major complication to this is that, while they are *better* than Active Classes at compartmentalizing wants and whims from their diplomacy, it’s still going to happen. Vanity and grudges that do not align with the aspirations of their Class are discarded into a pit they hide from the world. Whether those volatile elements are released in controlled bursts or at a breaking point, they will leak regardless, no matter how the Passive Class tries to sell or stress a sentiment of “Don’t worry about me”. The other complication is that their deeds for others are compelled to fit within the rigid definition of their own Class, liable to reduce their closest connections into props - the main character, maybe, but for a script they didn’t ask for. Whether to family, society, or a single loved one, Passive Classes are irreconcilably compelled to find fulfillment away from themselves. Who they are to others, who others are to them, what requests are fulfilled and how and if they were ever made at all, the trick is communication - and, bluntly, consent.

Intensity: Classes are divided into 4 sets of 4: Active Attunement (-!), Passive Attunement (+!), Active Adaptation (-?), and Passive Adaptation (+?). Each set of Classes within these parameters follows an identifiable mutation of the same behavior, creating a kind of “family tree”. However, it’s important to recognize this as, on any innate level, as neither progression *or* regression. The nature of this document will frame this with a narrative of escalation - “intensity” - but this is for convenience more than anything else. While these Classes certainly exist in this arrangement, any implication of hierarchy is baseless hypothesis; more intense Classes may be more prone to seek and speak greatness, this does not guarantee that they’ll succeed, that they should, that they’d even be *good* at it, or that this is all they are capable of. One could just as easily position these more intense Classes as “imbalanced”, speaking about them first before addressing calmer archetypes as more “harmonized” iterations. Of course, this too would be another subjective flourish, still baseless to a system that does not inherently indicate an actual rank...and if it *did*, such an evolutionary intent is owed no deference. Even ignoring whatever “principle” could exist in regards to “human nature”, our own modern society is unlikely to function any better if run to the (again, purely hypothetical) intent of caveman genetics. Classes will be described as a progression, of “Class 5 is Class 1 squared”, but this narrative is simply to make things more digestible. Please keep this in mind.

From what I heard, Hussie’s terminology was “Specialization”, but I have my arguments with that. Though, I imagine we’d have arguments on quite a bit...

Defining Classes as a see-saw was an interesting model. I've seen a few. They're all wrong, mostly due to adding too much myth to the Master Classes, and trying to build around them. I will make my case as best I can, but I also wanted to mention a friend of mine (who wanted to be anonymous, but still wanted credit) who came up with a better model. See, she figures low Intensity Classes are another kind of "extreme" as much as the high intensity ones, and devised her own model: basically, a globe. Cut it into quarters like an orange, and they'd represent Active Attunement, Passive Attunement, Active Adaptation, and Passive Adaptation, with the lowest and highest intensity at either end. It's a nice way of having true parity, not implying any kind of "true middle" (if it exists at all, I'm reserving the name "monk"), and pointing out that high extremes and low extremes have a lot in common where a see saw would put everything else between them. She's clever. I like her.

Rivalries: Classes can be divided into 4 sets of 4 in two notably different ways (and probably some others that are less important to bring up). While **Intensity** organizes a spectrum of escalation along individual branches, the Classes from all four branches which still share an equal rank of intensity have more in common than simple coincidences. Arguably as important as Pairs, **Rival Classes** are a designation between two Active or Passive Classes who share a rank of intensity, but are divided along Attunement or Adaptation. As such, they are personality types with an equal scale of ambition, but seek to fulfill it in methods bordering on "mirror-opposites". While it could all be phrased as a second verb, this document chooses to codify Rival Classes with an **adjective** that binds the two.

Class "Sway": Every Class will manifest with a particular binary, creating two variants of each. The names "Prospit" and "Derse" are lifted from Homestuck's lexicon; "Sun and Moon" or "Order and Chaos" are mostly-entirely suitable replacements with a more traditional vocabulary. "Extrovert" and "Introvert" might sound applicable, but feel far more out of place next to certain Classes too quiet or loud to serve as examples. Really, "Bouba" and "Kiki" do the job as well as anything. To summarize these two attributes *very* briefly...

-Prospits (or **Prospitians**, but that's a mouthful) have a very clear idea of "good", and little tolerance for the alternative. They may not think of *themselves* as virtuous, but even those with self loathing will rarely pretend to be anything else - what would the point be? They live in the moment, express (or withhold) their emotions straightforwardly, and are often slow to change their mind. The world might not be black or white, but Prospits would certainly *prefer* to deal in those terms; they can be stubbornly idealistic, even if that's not actually solving any problems, or matches the "ideals" of anyone else in the room. Again, none of this is *precisely* optimism or pessimism, but contemplating the greater nuance or potential of Prospits is ultimately a very un-Prospit thing to do. If Prospits do wrong, or if their close friends do (even to the Prospitian in question), they may be genuinely surprised to have it all pointed out...but as said, they are still rather slow to change their mind.

-Dersites have a very clear idea of "evil" - or at least, the web of different perspectives and contexts that would rush to define what ultimately can't.

While they are certainly more likely to engage in malice than Prospits, this is more from their own particular resignations, permanently predisposed to assume the worst of themselves, strangers, and often society as a whole. This can result in self-deprecation, gloating, and masquerades, often oscillating between all of them in their own fuzzy fog of irony, sarcasm, and sadism; misdirection as armor, misrepresented as misdirection for the sake of itself. Chronic neurotic self-examination leaves permanent cracks on whatever Classpect defines them, in an affect full of asterisks; if they don't believe anything for sure, why should you believe them? These are not healed scars, but bleeding wounds, as Dersites frequently find themselves with a familiar gnawing that they are unfinished people. Sure, they could look for greater truths and potentials of their soul, but it's scary to imagine there aren't any - so better to settle as the devil you know yourself as.

I think it'd be pretentious now to invent new words when so much here is dependent on Homestuck proper. I'm here to build and extrapolate Hussie's work, not hijack it (probably), and I'm perfectly proud of the effort I've exerted here anyways. I got too many people in my life telling me I should make this more "mine"; my signature's written all over this for anyone to notice, in every way I care about measuring.

Inversion: In which it is revealed 50% of your time has been wasted in regards to Aspects and Classes, but we gotta build up to it. Don't worry, Prospit and Derse are still static.

My only issue with the globe model is that it implies and even more inverted-inversion, where the see-saw (or rather, a properly organized see-saw) better illustrates into how standard-inversion functions. I mean in the globe model, they're touching now, so I guess...blah, use whatever model you want, so long as we understand what we're talking about. And no, I have no arguments with the Aspect wheel.

Discrepancies: A long, disorganized list of side-by-side case studies regarding Classes who could be confused for each other. This is especially important to particular permutations of Classes that veer off-script from their initial descriptions, in the name of showing that they haven't actually quit their script altogether - shuffle the cliches, but still checking all the boxes.

Let's get this ball rolling.

- - -

ASPECTS

(MOODS, VIBES, MEMES)

An "Aspect" is, to summerize, a platonic ideal: a rock-bottom primordial soup of values and imagery, reoccurring ad infinitum in a way that blurs nature or nurture. Each is locked to an antonym, creating an axis and language of compromises, intended or otherwise. It has no innate conclusion or arrangement, be it personal or political, beyond what we

make of it. People, countries, and religions are all (usually) more than one ingredient, sure, but no matter the composition, Aspects are that essential foundation of a human's sense of purpose.



Most everyone can intuit an Aspect innately, agreeing and internalizing at their discretion (peer-pressure aside), but one is still locked in - "bound" - as the favourite flavor the psyche will define itself by for years to come. Of course, this "binds" one to the opposed Aspect as well, brewing all sorts of antagonism to the world (and shame to ourselves) when we recognize (or project) these "wrong" values. Mythologization and fantasy buzzwords aside, don't lose sight of the fact that this is *tangible*. Barring some permutation of brain chemistry, **YOU**, reading this, are currently on one of these axes, stitched together with beliefs so default they may not be recognized as beliefs at all; even your skepticism may have an identifying flavour.

I don't believe in a Collective Subconscious, and I am not selling one to you. I believe in patterns and human nature; I believe all of this is just genetics bubbling vague shapes which we

wild animals arrange and decry at our leisure. Take a fair look at yourself, and - with any luck - you'll see it too. Then it won't matter what you believe.

The following are descriptions on both what compromises an Aspect cocktail, and what mannerisms and conniptions those bound to it are likely to display. The precise way people extoll, suffocate, embrace, or encourage their Aspect (let alone the opposed one) will vary, but even the furthest extremes are not immune to these generalizations, and always moreso the further one delves into self-reflection with so much "What I learned as a child". If you're trying to spot yourself, here's a tip: the antonym that disgusts you is often clearer than your actual figurehead.

THE WAVE RETURNS TO THE OCEAN

SPACE: Creation, Choice, Creative Expression, Will of the Universe, Surrender, Art, Ambiance, Meditation, Candy, Detachment, Abstraction, Dreams, Cold, Acceptance

NO ONE LIVES FOREVER

TIME: Destruction, Volition, Retaliation, Spite, Hunger, Death, Mechanisms, Material Reality, Inevitability, Endings, Conflict, Chaos, Profanity, Heat, Meat, Gasoline, Cruelty

Defining the extreme points on the axis of "Is" and "Isn't", Space and Time are Aspects that overthink the essentials of existence; Space is a masturbatory belief *about* beliefs, where Time is a paradoxical belief *against* beliefs. The Space Aspect is less "vanilla", and more "ice-cream flavoured ice-cream", venerating the rainbow tapestry of the human imagination, promoting a free-flowing creativity with no stakes, ownership, or pain. Its aesthetic signature defaults to the wonders of the Earth and the beauty of the stars, meditative and ascendant - which basically either hits Buddhism directly, or by accident. Spacebounds regard our ability to dream, to create, and to *choose*, as the most noble facet of life. A nurtured imagination helps them easily find new perspectives to uproot whatever's at face value...if, perhaps, too easily convinced what *they* came up with is the new "correct" interpretation. All this flowery mumbo-jumbo (probably involving actual flowers) makes the Spacebound innately amicable, with the snag that they often don't seem to understand why everyone else *isn't*. There is often an expectation that the strife of others is to be totally and cleanly solved by catching up to *their* wavelength. It's certainly easier to advocate letting go of earthly attachments when you're not the one attached, or aren't defaultly inclined to make attachments, or just won't *admit* the attachments you take for granted. Barring some real introspection - or, rather, extrospection -, the Spacebound are *inventing* the greater tranquility everyone should "surrender" to, which is far more likely to reflect their Class rather than genuine wisdom. Pride and cruelty are never gone from the Spacebound - only coated in an aesthetic of the opposite, chasing purity when harmony looks like too much work.

It feels like it'd be more work to talk about Space *without* mentioning Buddhism in some regard. Mind you, I don't think many other religions could align themselves with one particular Aspect, and I'd wager it'd end poorly if you felt it obligated to force connections and bask in whatever twisted picture you created, espousing what destinies you drew from it.

It's just for Buddhism specifically, really. All the Spacebound all seem to find it eventually, and most of us only recognize the Space Aspect when tied to that particular sect of scripture, with all the baggage that comes with it. I think it's important to understand that Space is a primal, raw ingredient of thought that can exist in *plenty* of arrangements...and if I can nakedly express my biases, I think *any* Aspect in complete totality is, if nothing else, unhealthy. Buddhism certainly wants the whole fucking pie.

Returning to the earlier analogy, one could call the Time Aspect "cone-flavoured ice-cream" - which is to say, an ideological fixation on the material world, excluding the messy opinions that distract from survival in the present moment. The snag is, Time is still ~~ice-cream~~ a belief, deifying nihilism to the point that dog-eat-dog becomes dogma. For most Timebounds, their center is little beyond pragmatism, facing adversity with a numb detachment that can feel equally a nurtured strength or a broken soul. For others - or the first, pushed in the right direction - the Time Aspect is a catalytic, cataclysmic root of great violence, venerating the immortal spite of the human infestation. It is the march of gladiators and the spirit of rebellion, painting pictures of fire and lightning, flesh and machinery, combustion and cannibalism, and all the rest of that rock 'n' roll. Now, this isn't to say all Timebounds are inherently feral - rather, just predisposed to believe it'll always come down to grit on anything that matters. This viewpoint and its expectations leaves them in a state of permanent unease: the world is cruel, people are fragile, art is meaningless, and all things are temporary. Far from Space's belonging, the Timebound think the world is out to get them, and rationalizing what hurts you and yours is wasting effort you could spend doing something about it. Still, while good intentions of "righteous and necessary violence" can manifest through this primordially blunt worldview, "death and destruction" is seductive in the naked admission of its own vapid ignorance. Even the most reasonable Timebounds will burn more bridges in life than they'll build - or at least, be convinced that they are capable of nothing more, no matter how empty that makes them feel. Ultimately, neither Space nor Time can rid itself of the other, in individuals or in life; they are two halves of the human spirit, and without compromise, they are *both* broken.

Neither of these are Good and Evil - but if you've read the "Hero with a Thousand Faces", you've heard of someone who would make that distinction. The quote "Lecherous fever of the organic cell" speaks to the essence of the Time Aspect, but it is meant with such hostility. Now, as far as I've seen it, I'd say not without cause; "might makes right", next to a fascination for material bedrock, reducing men to meat and genetics. Fascistic in the wrong hands, and a dash of cannibalism besides. I figure it's the survival instinct deified, permanently intertwined with imagery of fire and lightning that danced on the eyes of our ape ancestors...or, more whimsically, a reflection of burning stars fighting the infinite vacuum, raging against entropic oblivion on a cosmic scale.

Still, I'm inclined to be poetic about this one in particular: I've got skin in the game. It was a funny throughline to fit through my tastes and habits, and answer why "Do the Evolution" struck as deep as it did when I watched that music video. I've followed that sensation curiously, and what I've written down is the sum of the scope I've mapped out - Hellfire, Samsara, Gevurah. I'd

be remiss not to mention other Timebounds I've met, and while I can verify they're made of the same components, it's funny where the arguments are. Two of them agreed to half my definitions but didn't click with the other half, but what's funny is that they didn't agree on *which*. For one, Time is blunt materialism and empty violence, with no place for my mutterings on a warrior's honor. For another, Time is *only* fighting spirit and survival, and he refuses to recognize it in the apocalyptic extremes. Alas, what's universal, contextual, or personal...and who's just not being honest with themselves enough to admit it? I'm not saying it's not me...

- - -

LOVE CONQUERS ALL

HEART: Subjectivity, Soul, Singular Perspectives, Persona(lity), Passion, Identity, Charisma, Romance, Intimacy, Empathy, Theatre, Obsession, Relationship Dynamics

THE NEEDS OF THE MANY

MIND: Objectivity, Logic, Multiple Perspectives, Clarity, Research, Utility, Allocation, Systems, Puzzles, Strategy, Prediction, Decisions, Outcomes, Chess, Guiding Laws

Regardless of whether there is any actual interplay between the literal right or left brain, the Heart and Mind Aspects create an intuitive dichotomy between obtrusive emotion and elegant ascendance - and indeed, the emotions the Heart Aspect fixates on are *always* obtrusive. Heart mythologizes the wildest, loudest, and hottest passions into a representation of someone's pure soul, where self-sabotage proves it's genuine and contradiction proves complexity. It is a fixation on identity, along with which identities compliment each other and how; while it's not always romantic (even though it usually is) or implying that they're all flirts (even though they usually are), nobody romanticizes romance like a Heartbound - and rarely anything subtle compared to the wild, destructive obsessions of "I'd choose you even if the world burns". Even alone, the Heartbound are distinctive in how their sense of identity is never tidy, with the explorations on their "deep soul" looping in on itself. There's an intrinsic fascination with inventing new masks and affects and roles, often as much for charismatic improv as the contemplations that these constructs all reflect parts of themselves: noble, true, antagonistic, buried, etc. One of the more curious habits is treating these personas as capable of a dialogue and thoughts of their own - which is not to say being Heartbound is synonymous with DID, only that they are very susceptible to becoming lost in their own reflection. Stemming from this, many Heartbounds will pride themselves on empathic intuition, but it's a coinflip if any of that lands; really, wrong guesses call into question if the Heartbounds are investigating *anyone's* psyche or just making shit up. Ultimately, "The heart wants what it wants" and "I must be true to myself" are the only justifications given, the only justifications needed, all from individuals bound to a dogma that is - and let's call a spade a spade here - anti-logic.

Don't ever forget that Heart is between Rage and Time. Just because they get all gooey over romance doesn't mean they're pushovers. Things can - and will - get raw. As a controversial TV show once said, "Love is a psychopath".

The Mind Aspect, meanwhile, wants none of this: emotions are to be outmaneuvered, appeased, waited out, or flat out ignored, all in the name of pursuing a fair (though not always *happy*) system of justice. Mind is a notch away from Space, and shares priorities with patience, detachment, and collectivism. Among this overlap, and more important than a subtle affinity for low temperatures ("cooler heads prevail" and what have you), is the fixation on choice; rather than our ability to choose, they are concerned with the outcome of those choices. The most poetic picture the Mind Aspect can provide is that the world is a grand procession of cause/effect, and all our decisions should be weighed carefully if we want to come out better for it. Course, only the truly zealous Classes will preach that, leaving Mind with the least identifiable aesthetic of any Aspect - "smart?" and "math?" is not enough to go on. For the most part, if you want to identify a Mindbound, then you gotta look for someone trying to stuff down anything Heart-adjacent. Now sure, very few people have straightforward love lives, but it's the Mindbound who would prefer it all so clinical, trying to cleanly navigate what can't. Assuming they don't weigh their career or other goals above relationships entirely, then the ones they have are chosen tactically, trying to engineer the most collective good, or guiltily regarded as failing that. (Hopefully) unrelated to this, Mind even shares some of Heart's mask-making, but more for the pragmatism of tangible results in different social contexts...and if emotions need to be forced, or outright invented, it is Mind's ideology that best justifies those acts. This isn't to say they're sociopaths (even if they might want to be) or philistines (which is more a Time thing), but the philosophical clarity the Mindbound chase requires that all the messy stuff is repressed regulated.

Paints such a picture of drama, don't it? Look, I'll write what I can and point to Latula and Terezi, even though those are fictional characters created to exemplify more explosive, high stakes interpretations of these qualities. But I have to. I'm not gonna touch the *real* drama I know from the Mindbounds in my life. Not without plausible deniability and equivalencies.

And another thing: Time and Mind have an odd overlap when it comes to ideas of "practicality". If you hear a few talking points people go over, you might confuse the two, but one would cut the Gordian Knot even if it knew how to untangle it. Remember, these two Aspects are *nearly* on other sides of the compass, and Space has just as many arguments with Heart: what's truly wagered here is instincts vs. patience. At its most dignified, Time's lucidity is still built on "what you see is what you get" immediacy, its efficiency damaged by short-term extreme measures, and its logic too hungry to rush to conclusions. Mind can be ruthless, competitive, but rarely ever reductive; Time likes its little boxes, its quick insults, and those instincts will drive - or pervert - any actual calculations at play.

...I mean, you *have* picked up on my own writing style, right?

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CLAP YOUR HANDS IF YOU BELIEVE

HOPE: Fantasy, Utopia, Exceptions, Innocence, Heroism, Reinvention, Perfection, Impossibility, Suspension of Disbelief, Sugarcoating, Silver Linings, Denial, Lying

CUT THE BULLSHIT

RAGE: Truth, Harsh Reality, Rigid Structure, Disillusionment, Sobriety, Sanity, Memory, Limitation, Routine, Pragmatism, Doubt, Bitterness, Futility, Tantrums

The Hope Aspect veers further from Space than Mind did, where “Ideal risks” sharpen into “million-to-one shots that fix everything”; it’s a pretty distinctive niche of the human psyche and our myths, already dissected and discussed, and all we’re clarifying are those with their self-identity tied to it. The Hopebound possess an ever-present lurch of optimistic imagination - that friends (or strangers) can be trusted and everything will come up aces eventually, no matter the odds (or precedent) of that not coming to pass. There’s just this deep-rooted indignity to it all, either feeling their circumstances are worth exemption from rules, or that said rules are loose enough they shouldn’t be enforced, or that the rules are plain *wrong* and deserve rewriting. There is a charisma to their wild ideas, but not often *strategy*, and limits to their ability to sell these ideas to themselves as much as others. Hope is an unwieldy Aspect, with those on a winning streak still worried of how long they can keep it up (or pretend to be keeping it up), and those in dire straits incapable of practical solutions; the deeper the pit, the higher they’re convinced they’ll need to jump. It’s not (all) delusion: it’s defiance, most days, from someone personally insulted at the cards they were dealt, retaliating by either throwing it back in the dealer’s face or betting the damn farm. Hope is an Aspect of never-say-die saviors, bold innovations that cut through what was once set in stone, sincere faith in a future that cannot come about *without* faith...or the Aspect of broken promises and blind denial, blowing their money on scratch tickets while they try to aggressively pretend everything’s fine - sometimes, fairly convincingly. No matter the intent, the Hope Aspect is very dangerous in its ability to appear as anything but.

In Homestuck’s exposition, Hope is labelled the “most powerful Aspect”. It’s a loaded term. I get it, okay, but ‘power’ isn’t the most important variable to keep track of, and a lot of people miss that. A lot more people don’t seem to realize they have the authority to disagree with that assertion.

Personally? Maybe it’s my experiences, or the ol’ Demiurge analogues of Time, but the Hopebound rub me wrong the most. Sure, Spacebounds are diametrically opposed, but the nature of the axis is that you can at least force a conversation from it; we’re at least speaking the same language, even if the goalposts are swapped. Hopebounds have a bad habit of only listening to what they want out of you, summarizing your speeches in a way that suits them...which might explain why the Ragebounds speak the way they do.

Moving in a moodier direction than Heart, Rage gets its eponymous name from centering on the most obtrusive emotion of all, and all worldly obtrusions that (should) evoke it. More than contrast, Rage is almost some

kind of natural predator to Hope, with a fetishization of disappointment and wake-up-calls. This bitterness is not exactly *compassionate*, but is seen as a justice: hatred is honest, memory defines us, failure teaches us, apologies are worthless, and the world's cruelties exist for a reason...right? Rage is, despite itself, a dogma, adhering to the belief that the truth hurts, what hurts is probably true, and it is noble to exemplify both those things. Now, they're not (inherently) bullies or anything, and more timid Classes will only demonstrate this situationally against carefully decided targets, but Ragebounds tend to believe that insulting someone's hairstyle or choice of music is equally important as any actual point they're making - humility through humiliation, so to say. Still, this destructive streak can fester into a contempt for any happiness besides *schadenfreude*, zealously eager to break apart someone's "lesser" comprehension of reality...which leads into how precarious it is to worship an idea of truth that supplants genuine observation. Ragebounds are prone to mistrust facts and testimony unless it is satisfyingly (or conveniently) caustic, making them arrogantly skeptical on nothing but their gut, while thinking being *smug* is, itself, an argument. If this gets out of hand, the pursuit of "truthier truths" dismisses anything outside its manufactured mythology, making the Ragebound increasingly conspiratorial in their sole sobriety. While both Aspects can motivate and shake foundations, having your head in the clouds or feet on the ground work better as methodology - not the point.

To say "Truth" is synonymous with Rage is still an oversimplification. "Truth" can be a lot of things, and the foundation of those iterations often comes from Light, Time, Mind, and even Void as much as Rage - a truth that guides, that burns, that can be calculated, that remains incomprehensible to mortal minds, all just as "truth-y" as the one that demands it's hard to swallow. Rage and Time come the closest in agreeing, certainly both fostering a sentiment of "The real world sucks, deal with it" - yet, that single sentiment does not an Aspect make, only just a convergent evolution of it all. Time has too much adrenaline, too much ambition, and too much wanting to kill everyone who mildly disagrees with you. Most of its philosophy stems from the empty gnawing of being unable to do that. "Don't get mad, get even" says the Time Aspect...but Rage is every ideal and pride *in* getting mad, no matter how little it accomplishes. It's not supposed to, really; "tangible results" was never a part of its truth. Just important to realize that every truth is cultivated.

Still, while that might be the root, the aesthetic and personality certainly have a different splendor too - no fire and lightning clockwork for Mx. Grumpyants, oh no! Rage will always be the little nagging voice, reminding anyone around that any fantasy is just fleeting dreams, pixels, ink, or stage props. Perhaps It's most distinguishing features is all the simulation theory hullabaloo, or the Dionysian obsession with madness and drink - eventually, one way or another, it always comes back to clowns.

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EVERYTHING HAPPENS FOR A REASON

LIGHT: Symbology, Answers, Fortune, Luck, Destiny, Storytelling, Conclusions, Association, Assumption, Fate, Coherency, Holistics, Payoff, Hints, Canon, Cliches,

?

VOID: , Maybe, I dunno, Whim, Flippancy, Confusion, Guesswork, Rumours, Myth, Nonsense, Silence, Mystery, Secrets, Surprises, Irrelevancy, Fanon, Pumpkins

The Light Aspect presents itself as a seeker of great truths, unifying and guiding those that find it - and while that's not technically wrong, it's important to realize that anything one notch off from Time is looking for catharsis before anything else. Light expands where Time reduces, turning blunt judgements into resplendent archetypes, all in the name of clean and compelling narratives. While the Lightbound (probably) do not literally believe their world a fiction, they are often eccentric in arranging it as though it was one; stories, titles, myths, popularity contests, tropes and cliches, all treated as tangible enough to trust and work off of. Even if they (consciously) put this aside, there's still an innate superstition that colours their worldview: what they *expect* to happen is what *ought* to happen (do not bring Lightbounds to casinos). If life is a puzzle, the Lightbound are way, way, way too quick to assume they found all the corner pieces; that any and all unknowns uncovered may still be fit to existing, verified categorizations, and that the most annoying thing people can do is not stick to their scripts. Even in the face of doubt, Light's complexity compounds, rationalizing curveballs away with a lust for answers that only answers itself. The Aspect that pertains to relevant information ironically obscures the most relevant fact of all: stories are *comforting* more often than they are *true*. The ability to connect dots does not mean the dots *should* be connected, leaving the Lightbound chasing a "grand destiny" they don't realize they're inventing. "Luck" may be the more accurate name, but Lightbound find it difficult to admit their worldview hinges on coincidence. To keep the golden flame of fervor going, you're going to need to burn alot of books.

Lightbounds seem to fight me the least on buying into this whole personality system (the most is Ragebounds). Still, sorting through the actual truth and what they just associate about themselves, or feel like guessing on...well, don't let what I wrote make you think I take it personally. I will say this though: gender roles and propaganda can be some of those "superstitious myths" they take a little too personally...

The Void Aspect is Space's somehow-more-depressing sibling, finding value in exactly the kind of unsatisfying lack of payoff Light abhors. It revels in uncommitted ambiguity, contemplating what surprises lie outside our perception, and how meager our preconceptions are in the face of such hypotheticals. "Doubt" is the most intrinsic quality of the Voidbound, and probably the reason it's hard to name any others; if life is a puzzle, then the Voidbound don't believe in corner pieces, or even the picture on the box. It is a bit of a coinflip, however, if they think "the truth is out there" waiting to be discovered by those wise enough to never trust anything for certain...or if existence truly is nothing more than cheerful nonsense, only ruined if you try to force it into order. The more you look for answers, the more you could wind up wasting your time, or find something you can't unsee. Then again,

some Voidbounds can spend so much time *imagining* what's out there, that they'll argue based on wild hunches they either can't or won't clarify - sometimes, without *admitting* they're hunches. Confusion can be a valuable state of mind, embraced or encouraged, spiritually or tactically. Still, while the Lightbound are dangerously overcertain of all-they-can-be, the Voidbound...well, "lack". Whatever Class they are is composed of values they - by definition - cannot articulate, where self-reflection challenges self-confidence. Hunches and flights of fancy are their preferred state of being for the reason of their lack of reason, where being truly *known* can feel equal parts impossible and precarious. The Lightbound rarely see their true potential, but where the Voidbound often do, they simply do not recognize it as such.

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EVERYBODY DO THEIR PART

LIFE: Solutions, Health, Politeness, Social Obligations, Support, Stability, Harmony, Growth, Appearances, Teamwork, Nature, Nurture, Food, Safety, Complacency

I DON'T OWE YOU A SMILE

DOOM: Problems, Sickness, Spiraling, Dysfunction, Isolation, Fatalism, Depression, Coping, Crying, Venting, Rot, Decay, Rest, Reprieve, Resignation, Closure

The Life Aspect shares some of the archetype obligation from Light, but tempers it with an essential idealism: the only story being told is "and everyone lived happily ever after". The Lifebound strive for health, sustainability, emotional wellness, cheerful communities, and fetishizes the smallest steps to get there. Life is tied for Hope in terms of positivity, but leaning to Time instead of Space is what defines its language of practical, tangible solutions, and the vigilance in keeping your hands busy. On a surface level, it seems like there's no downsides, but the keyword is surface. The Life Aspect still shares weaknesses with Light, misunderstanding impression and substance: trying to make people *look* healthy feels as valid as *being* healthy, all while far easier to engineer. Even this reliable practicality is a double edged sword, as the Life Aspect never runs out of ways to slot itself into the lives of others, and self-perpetuates by trying to kill the voice that protests - "burnout" is in the realm of the Doom Aspect, the *enemy*. Whatever Class a person may have, the Life Aspect will dominate the definition of that self-identity into "unpaid therapist", inflicting a burden to carry their entire lives. Every Lifebound is, effectively, springlocked into smiling for (their projected perception of) everyone else's benefit, and they will ***always*** snap eventually. In the end, Life can be as fragile as Hope, but the damage to their sense of self is not (inherently) from incredulity as much as fatigue, disgusted at the high cost of upkeep

they can rarely admit is coming *entirely* from their own head; even if their friends want help, the details of how much and in what way are often lost in translation through the deeply-worn conceptions. Again, “unpaid therapist”, but not always qualified to be a paid one either. No matter their best, it is the fetishization of stability that ultimately destines it for instability.

Even if it’s happened before, you’d be surprised how many learn the wrong lessons and just wind up breaking apart again. So much ugly. So much *unworkable* ugly.

“Destined instability”, however, has a name: Doom. It is the Aspect of pessimism, decay, languishing, and probably just the emo/goth scene as a whole. While occasionally fascinated by death and our futility towards it, it is not the adrenaline-filled conflicts of Time; rather, a perspective on loss, grief, and the contented numbing that comes with processing all of that. Indeed, “contented numbing” overlaps with the directly-adjacent Void, even if Doom has no innate interest in secrets and strays even further from Space’s lack of bias; in all the intangibles of what could be, expect only disappointment, as all good things come to an end and leave you lesser. The Doombound themselves, however, are all *quite* accustomed to this state of mind, and fairly in tune with the positives that come from not having a goddamn thing to prove to anyone. If it all rots *eventually*, then bothering to hold on to relationships, morals, or dignity can feel insulting, especially if it’s societal and not anything personally chosen. While it isn’t unfair to regard this as an eternal personal raincloud of “unproductive bellyaching”, the Doombound can be both greatly approachable or emotionally suffocating - sometimes simultaneously. Genuine compassion shines all the more in contrast, from someone with no expectations of others as much as themselves...though, sympathy alone is not enough for everyone. Even to the Doombound themselves, there’s cracks from what they only *thought* they could tolerate or give up on, worn down by an Aspect that may as well be surgically designed to justify self-sabotage and willful isolation. Between Stepford Smiles or eye rolls, arguments of happiness’s surplus or scarcity only reach the same result: failure by futility, or failure by design.

It seems much more culturally accepted that someone’s “healing process” might involve staying at home for awhile, away from everyone, eating a bucket of ice cream and listening to country music. Still, the perception that Doom is *only* an Aspect to be indulged in small bursts before you get back in the saddle reflects on Life’s goalposts. Sometimes you don’t want to get back in the saddle; you’re sick of that fucking horse and you just want to lie down at the side of the road and starve to death. Fuck the horse. Fuck people. Fuck everyone, including yourself. It’s the sort of sentiment that makes talking to Doombounds difficult - I mean, sure, don’t help a friend who doesn’t want help, but if they’re psychologically predisposed to prefer being depressed?...It can get murky. I mean, I owe it the same argument I give Time, in that it’s a valid path of ideology by virtue of existing at all. I don’t abide totality, but even that’s just my personal take, and I’m just *really* not sure sometimes what ideal moderation looks like...

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DON’T WORRY, BE HAPPY

BREATH: The Future, “The Easy Way”, Trust in Intuition, Freedom, The Wind, Trailblazing, Individuality, Moving Forward, Freeflow, Calm, Forgive, Forget, Boredom

DON'T YOU DARE WALK AWAY

BLOOD: The Past, “The Hard Way”, Trust in Others, Bonds, Oaths, Promises, Grudges, Family, Judgement, Suffering, Comraderie, Ordeals, Stress, Sacrifice, Debt, Scars, Guilt,

The second axis of Aspects really couldn't care less if the mind is looking internal or external, resulting in two Aspects equally as likely to find unifying threads between all Aspects as ignore the “big picture” stuff altogether, while their lack of internal interrogation makes them reliable in how they trust others and themselves at face value. The Breath Aspect is the absolute peak of positivity, transcending the limitations of both Hope and Life by assuring with complete sincerity that “Everything is going to be okay, eventually”. The specific details and structure of the future, be it imagined or observed, are rendered irrelevant as Breath positions it's full faith in this stress-free peace of mind, as contagious as it is indefatigable. Pain is temporary, promises were made in an old world that doesn't exist anymore, leave behind what (or who) isn't working for you, and you'll find your path someday, somehow. If Breath falters, it doesn't need an argument to reassert itself; only the *vibe* must return, feeling like this obvious constant you didn't really lose so much as forgot you always had. The Breathbound are steadfast, accommodating, and resilient enough to make excellent figureheads...but, it is that *vague* sense of the future that betrays a lack of endgame, and the humble wisdom that bypasses so many existential concerns can be a buffer against not actually having a real answer. Believing in tomorrow is charismatic, but not prediction, all while the assurances easily turn incestuous: resolved of the need to justify itself, or assert itself at all. Finding simple solutions can mean little besides the path of least resistance, where it doesn't matter if you're bored or depressed, only that you're relaxed. Breath is blissful, independent freedom - and sometimes, even often, not a damn thing else.

There is some overlap with Void, but, just in a convergent evolution of it all. They come from different places, with different languages, to reach that easy-going intuition in what's not quite there.

The Blood Aspect shares many of Breath's strengths and weaknesses, in its lack of bias to tangible and intangible, giving it unique solutions and a certain rallying charisma. It is, however, still diametrically opposed, worshipping the past and all the pain that comes from holding on tight to what was, using that endurance of suffering to create bonds to last through thick and thin - family, born or forged. While “community and cooperation” may feel redundant to Life (blame the human genome), Blood has *zero* interest in being polite about its assurances, and mistrusts innovation compared to

what works...or, doesn't work. We suffer, and we suffer together; Blood is the Aspect of martyrs, of donating kidneys to relatives you don't even talk to anymore, and trying to endure a friend's terrible choice of movie night. It does all of this while being too responsible to resemble Doom's lackadaisy, or overthink the reliability of memory like Rage's obsessions. Like Breath's good moods, Blood's bad moods don't need to be argued, but it is the *loyalty* through that grim affect that can make Bloodbonds as magnetic as their Inverse. If the Bloodbond have a reason to be grumpy, it's because they're sick of everyone's shit, but also care about them deeply; however, this doesn't mean they'll always be *justified* in lashing out, either from an unrequited intensity, or a particularly petty definition of "everyone's shit". Just as with Breath's vaguery, Blood can flounder on goals besides the purity of itself, as the burden of suffering loops into a sunk cost fallacy that's a hard sell to the very people the Bloodbond requires to identify themselves. Likewise, this idea of "thick and thin" can result in pardoning - or *encouraging* - abuse, be it their own or others. Breath and Blood both create some powerfully single-minded people, unifying groups under banners whether it's theirs or not...but if they don't want to lose them, they have to *listen*, not just talk.

In the broken feed of misinformation the Homestuck community works off of and propagates, it was still clear that Breath and Blood were the Aspects of 'leadership'. Everyone was fairly agreed on this, but what annoyed me was no one would say *why*. "Just because they are"? If it's all fiction, fine, but even to those that did think there was more to it, I couldn't find anyone with a real case. Why, precisely, do these two ideological concepts IN PARTICULAR double any Class's potential to play autocrat? Why do people of so many stripes WANT to follow them?

Well, I've met more than a few on either end, and this is my take, if nothing else.

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I've often mused on this (and responded to the understandable skepticism that I'm making a big deal out of nothing) - people sometimes wobble on the Aspects clockwise and counter-clockwise, and it's not impossible to see a gradient. Is there truly such a clean split when it comes to people, or at least measured in percentages? It feels right to assume people are messier than 12 defaults, but I've still not seen anyone actually truly pivot to a new primary OR Class; that's with a lot of investigating of people young and old, often asking family about certain people in my life. You can trace the same steps, and hear the same cliches, even 40 years ago. People follow blueprints, and if there's any way out, I'd honestly consider it preferable - as is, we play the cards we're dealt.

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ATTUNE/ADAPT

(WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO PROVE?)

Classes don't exist in a vacuum, where there's a gradient in how they deal with "what is right" (AKA their Aspect). "Attuning" tries to coheses and define the default of the belief, where "Adapt" refers to the rearrangement - or outright defiance - of these conventions. While "principle" and "pragmatism" may also get the point across, it doesn't always go that way, as an Attuned Aspect can feel like practical fact, and an Adapted Aspect can feel righteous and cosmic. It's also worth noting that Adapted Aspects often

feel more fragile and disruptive, but this is often a matter of perception; there's value and danger to any combination of Classes and Aspects, and Attuned ones can be just as precarious while feeling very innegotiable to the individual holding them. The horseshoe bent of intensity will affect the volume of these ideologies, but anyone can find something they'd die for; what varies most is the certainty that the current situation qualifies.

I just think "Exploit" doesn't capture a whole side. "Subvert" kinda works but...look I picked what I picked for a reason.

Regardless, every Class can more or less be translated as "someone who [verbs] their Aspect". It sounds simplistic, but, at a person's core, it's the guiding principle behind a huge swath of their personality and actions.

From these perspectives, "goodness" is inherently:

Easy - Intuitive - Merit - Static | Variable - Tricky - Subjective - Effort

Which correlates into the Class Pairs:

**Masters - Fae - Servants - Prophets | Magicians - Outlaws - Royals
- ???**

The associated verbs (more or less) correspond as such:

**Command - Create - Guard - Know | Change - Steal - Destroy -
Conquer**

Or, in other words to get the point across...

Assume - Grow - Weaponize - Study | Nudge - Fix - Censor - Rewrite

...Or to be *harsh*...

**Hoard - Propagate - Exploit - Condone | Tamper - Cheat - Violate -
Corrupt**

With all that in mind, it's time to get to the juicy parts...

...in, just a second. One more thing.

AN APOLOGY IN ADVANCE

(I HOPE THIS HURTS)

I need to be clear that this is going to sting. Beyond a certain levity and teasing, there will be hurtful accusations made of both crimes in the past, or the potential future, and I will mark these as symptoms of immutable conditions that we cannot and should not downplay, let alone deny. I will not pretend that there are not more diplomatic alternatives to describing Classes, and that my own fixation on confrontation has not influenced my faith in my method - I have my own delusions, after all.

I can say that, no matter what thrills I get in hurting people, I can (and want to) give it a point; bad habits, chronic cycles of disfunction, methods of abuse, the languages of self loathing, all of these sore spots are worth hitting by virtue of being unique. If I say "this Class is heroic and looks out for their friends", then specifications become increasingly blurry by our own aspirations - *everyone* wants to be heroic and look out for their friends. There's alot of potential here to focus on who we could be, and to make that exciting, but it's too easily lost, squandered, and cheapened if we lead with dopamine and celebration. I don't want you to say "Oh, this Class looks cool, I wonder if I'm one!" - I want you to say "I'm in this picture and I don't like it" before I get to any compliments. It's unpleasant, but it hightens self-consciousness in the unsure, and weeds out the romantics who would otherwise fuck with my flowcharts.

Even with that in mind, I cannot promise parity; the third paragraph will always be the hardest hitting (even a few of the first ones won't be flattering), but acknowledging a full sum of damage to oneself and those around us still won't be even for everyone. Some Classes are higher risk than others, and acknowledging that is important to mitigate that risk (to say nothing of WARNING other people of specific toxicity and excuses). To come to terms with our Class, to come to terms with *ourselves*, we cannot use rose-tinted glasses, or pretend the crimes of the past didn't matter or won't happen again. The ugly side of us is the most distinct, the toughest to survive and the trickiest to sanitize - you fight that, you fight your best qualities alongside it. You want someone else's best qualities? Sheesh, go nuts, imitate and be the person you know you're not - but you have to know you're not. I'll have a whole section on discrepancies later, if anyone's still fiesty.

I think I've made my point that if we just want a Classpect to "make us sound cool and be fun", we miss the bigger point. We're talking about entire human lives here - the good, the bad, the questions we'll be asking ourselves for decades and in our darkest moments. I'm trying to articulate the question for people who misinterpret it, while mentioning what answers are likely to work and which aren't. It's up to the individual to choose what answer works for them, and some Classes have more choice and leeway than others - it's not fair, but it's true. Classes are an anatomy of our wants, fears, and preconceptions; it's hard explaining that it's static for us, and not universal for the people around us. The best way I have to prove that it even *exists* is to hit you in every sore spot, cut every artery, pinch every nerve, all while pointing to the chart. The same things that bother us will not bother other people, and however uncomfortable that makes you feel is one more hint to what your Class is.

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PROPHETS

(SCHOLARS, INVESTIGATORS, BYSTANDERS)

The first step of Attunement is the last step of grief: acceptance. That the Aspect, the world, simply is; blameless and beautiful, good and bad both. There are obvious limitations, but that can be more strength than weakness, seeing a whole that need not accomodate only one voice within it. It is a quiet faith, and when wielded correctly, it permits a field of answers as accurate as they are unpleasant - immutable, but highlighting other opportunities. Emboldened, and you've got someone who **knows** more than they should.

MAGES (OR MAGI) are know-it-all's who never feel the need to prove it, and position themselves in situations where they never have to. Comfortable with isolation, disinterested in praise, awkward at basic social interaction, Mages are often less your friend and more just "around". While capable of great trust and devotion, passing this threshold usually happens with zero fanfare, and doesn't change the day to day much either. Most comfortable in personal duties and passion projects, it's often a continued effort from friends to keep them involved; even then, it's a Mage staple to suddenly and abruptly leave conversations without a proper goodbye. They're used to their advice going unheeded, and aware (usually) that their insights are purely personal anyways, but Mages themselves are often blind to the greater ripples of their convictions; be it genuine assistance to others they didn't intend, or cracks in their logic and the consequences thereof. It is a complicated dance to keep them socially involved without becoming too frustrated at their weird priorities and scheduling, but that confusion tends to go both ways. Mages have their routine - in their career, their hobbies, even their emotions - and they'll happily do that for the rest of their life if nothing stops them. Solving people's problems is a compromise, birthed from either confusion or annoyance (there is certainly a difference between shy and confident Mages) that anyone has those problems to begin with. Somewhere, there is the subtle hope that their knowledge and way of life will inspire to some degree, easing the everpresent strain of indecision and worry...but they sure as shit won't slow down for you to catch up.

Mulder. I'm talking about Mulder from *The X-Files*. I guess Captain Holt from *Brooklyn 99* too. The more people come to grips with that precise kind of weirdo, the better. I know quite a few depictions of atypicals meet the bill, but...well, I'm a living counterpoint, as are many aspies I've aggressively psychoanalyzed. Still, Pages and Mages are awfully close...there might be some commonality, as the isolation and difficulty connecting that comes with that condition tends to lead to Mages. After all, it's hard to attend others when your own place in the world is so consistantly tumultuous and a 24/7 problem. Maybe. This is guesswork on my end from the limited evidence, but I at least know Mages who aren't autistic and people who are autistic who aren't Mages, and that's enough to kill some stereotypes.

Mages **know** their Aspect - appreciate, understand, observe, *that's it*, and purely personally too. They're Attuned to the bare minimum, appreciating the greater whole without needing to save the world, their friends, or even themselves. If it goes wrong and screws them over, if it limits them in any way, they don't miss a beat; even if they're proven egregiously incorrect and everything they've fought for and believed in was a lie, they'll probably bounce back in a week tops (and not always with the lesson you'd *expect* they learn from it). They walk this path of virtue and dignity alone, because they can and no one seems to agree with them (as readily as they'd like) anyways. These beliefs embolden them on their career, hobbies, or other pursuits, which they pursue unerringly. They want little, and what they do want is tied up in their beliefs; the fact that their guiding principles may lean selfish is often a recognized occupational hazard, which they cannot* change and do not want to. Even when it lacks flair or high stakes, their read of their Aspect is still something fulfilling and engrossing; it's their

simple truths, their inescapable fate, their private passions, their singular instructions to life, the car they expect to break down every now and again, and their parent who won't let them out to play. It just is.

They definitely learned that early: "This is life, and there's no changing that." A collection of childhood experiences to numb you to things going wrong...hell, even Sollux the Mage of Doom can't even die correctly or have an apocalypse he was ready for, can he?

Also, this neutrality often extends to politics: Mages either refuse to get involved, or personally represent the Overton Window. I've met exceptions, but they've other outlets where they try to find truth in the middle of extremes. I don't consider it their best quality, but, I've my own baggage I suppose. So does everyone.

Whatever problems a Mage faces, their favourite solution is the same thing that too often causes them: isolation, from the world and all the people in it. Whatever ambitions a Mage has, none of them include statues or songs in their honor, compared to being a perceptive and savvy lone operator - a simple soul speaking simple truths, "tsk tsk"ing away the sympathetic fools who do not share their wisdom. Humble, unambitious, reasonable, polite...but *only* to *their* definition of it. Tier 1 is an extreme as much as Tier 4, only so much more conservative in scope; Mages are quite possibly the most stubbornly single-minded force of nature the human psyche can muster, and often fail to see the problem in that. Their lack of interest in others affairs blurs into a lack of responsibility, standing by while friends suffer from not knowing the solution innately, or not knowing a reason that suits them. Even if they are persuaded, Mages can be unapologetically slapdash with fixes from impatience and inflexibility. The real problems are when Mages start getting uppity and throw their weight around. Everything they want to do feels right to them, every justification feels consistent to their self-image, everyone else seems increasingly lost without their guidance; the impulse to *become* intelligent twists to an impression they are by default. It can be annoying getting a lecture from someone who assumes they know more than you like it's divine right; it can be *dangerous* having someone lie to you without even consciously recognizing they're doing so, or what they stand to gain. Again, not a "money and power" type, but pride can be quieter than that single definition, leaving ignoble desires mislabeled by someone who only needs to (or *can*) convince themselves that they're above such things. Mages are more than their monotonic self image, but both potential and malice can be swept away as long as "convenient" feels comfortable. They're a cult of one - and not above crusades.

With all worst case scenarios I go over, it's important to stipulate that the degree will always vary with the person and the choices they make. Teenage tantrums, exasperated by abuse or addictive vices, jokes gone too far that may have never been jokes at all, or all idle fantasies from someone who *knows* they *could*.

I've got Mage friends - or did, anyways. Tried to make sure this stuff was verified, and never went too far. Not that I didn't see value in being able to call him out sometimes - to know I can at all. I knew a friend for about 12 years, and despite some ups and downs, he was one of my closest pals. I considered him family, and he gave me some encouraging words of advice putting this together - a Prospit Mage of Light he was. Still...he's not around anymore. I still consider him family somewhere, but I can't forget who he's hurt.

Prospit Mages live in a state of perpetual contentment. They have a clear interpretation of how to be a good person, and are fairly confident it won't be much trouble - or crowded. Their "perfect approach to life" might sound naive, but the fact that it works for them (and them alone) is the only proof they need...so who are you to attack their happiness? Sure, they're agreeable, and not likely to take offense to much, but squaring up for direct conflict ends poorly; whatever the dynamic was before, it can very easily turn into "I'm right, and if you don't see that, I'm leaving". Here's a hint: it's not a bluff. They might be wrong, but it's *never* a bluff. Whether awkwardly timid or professionally self-righteous, Prospit Mages will face all the ups and downs of being a human being on their terms alone, and trying to sway any of that - *regardless* of one's intention - is a Herculean labor. If opportunities or relationships fall apart, they'll shrug it off and say they did all they could; if they do beat themselves up over their actions, forgiveness is irrelevant, as is suggesting they might be off on *which* action needs critique. Buried at variable depths, they've all got an oddball sense of humor that not everyone will "get", emblematic of their overall willful independence. In every facet of every layer of persona and principle, all is affixed with one single line: "Take it or leave it".

You meet one, and it's like, you never met anyone like this before. They're weird and static and it's like pulling teeth hanging out with them if they've got more important things to do...and then, you meet another. And then you get recommended Snufkin clips on Youtube, and you realize people like this just, *exist*.

Originally, I thought Sollux's more standoffish traits were his Derse side, and even more recently I thought timid Mages were only a Derse thing. I hope Hussie knew, at least.

Derse Mages live in a state of perpetual confusion. The Derse edge cracks all the calm certainties of Magehood, but does not provide alternatives, resulting in a breed of Mage that can never quite find the balance of snarky, supportive, and stoic they're aiming for...but predictably, still not one that wants any (or at least much) help with that. Derse Mages are much more negotiable to their social circle and obligations, with Magely compulsions less gospel and more guidelines. Often their most stubborn convictions are decided on after a few (possibly *one*) genuine attempts at alternatives, tempered by a transparent admission of whatever doubts lead to it and may be lingering. This inner mechanism spills into their people skills, as while Derse Mages are, again, more negotiable to be helpful at all compared to Prospits, they're often very ham-fisted when doing so; frictions in personality, reckless miscommunication, assumption superseding curiosity, and a tendency to acknowledge all of these things before shrugging and doing it again 5 minutes later. Mages are, after all, Prophets, which is not any bonafide psychic power to be clear, but a self-identity built on intuition - *not* investigation. Prospit Mages are personally resolute and worldly complacent based on this (DEBATABLEY QUALIFIED) certainty of who they are, what they know, and what they're capable of...but, to have *all* of that be perpetually off-balance makes Derse Mages feel like they've got something

to prove, without even being completely sure who they're trying to prove it too.

The worldbuilding, interpersonal lore, and - most importantly (to me) - characterization of the second batch of Trolls in Homestuck is weighed down by how transparently they remain Hussie spitefully looking down on internet stereotypes and misinterpretations of their own (deliberately obfuscated) system. With the asterisk firmly established, I have had some reconsiderations on good old Meulin, whose catgirl-meme-material still surrounds a *functional* blueprint of a Mage of Heart. Perhaps someday I'll meet one proper, and see how much of a trainwreck it truly is to be the Class that most firmly controls their emotions paired with the Aspect of wildly expressing emotion without restriction.

Still, it is her trail of destruction playing matchmaker that makes the best thread to follow, in what pushed her to do it in the first place. Sollux is more uncomplicated, yet I find it much harder to find Derse Mage representation in media compared to Prospits. I did know one personally. Grew up around each other, but really got to talking past high school. I liked him. I miss him. He was a great friend. In ways, he still is. But the bridges are burned. Life goes on.

One last note: while I think all Classes have an *affect* you can learn to recognize, Derse Mages have one of the most unique speaking styles. Rigid, tense, professional, glossing over open self-deprecation and all the ways they know they're a nerd. It seems so specific, but they all grow into it independently, and I haven't known any to grow out.

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Stoic. No further words needed, no embellishment or exaggeration except to play conciliatory to those confused. The deeper nature of this world provides law and language, distilled from the essence of whispers and wisps; you put your trust in elemental energy, permit it, and in return are made enigmatic. Science made of magic most call madness, documenting all findings in a study with no conclusion besides the process itself. Pariah to politics, the squabbles men make fighting over the shells and scrap secondary always to the greater game afoot - irrelevant, distracted, they shout and you murmur, perpendicular, askew. The Mage in their tower, still stoic, static, stressed at requests of the inept. Expect fact to meet fiction in parity, perish the naivete, stand back while the spellcaster saves only lives recognized in the lines of prophecy. If a mob marches to meet you, accept your fate as you accepted theirs, ascendance through acquiescence - deny all the arrogance. Mortality is messy, mired in maybes and ambiguity, but a glimpse of cosmic clarity can confuse you're only capable of compromise - or corruption, if you forget which side you're looking in from. Madness made magic and back again, lens cut your eye and bled over the garden, wizard gone wild with the wrong revelation. Between good and evil isn't purity, just mediocrity - not justice, it just is, nothing noble in neutrality. Math is only method, perspective is not purpose; your tome is a poor bible, better fit as focus. Observe, and the arcane will give you paths - wield, and you will cut them yourself.

Never get complacent.

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SEERS are fascinating people by virtue of how much they resemble the trope of movie characters designed entirely to dump exposition: content to observe the stories of others, present in every conversation with a perspective from the outside, and verbose despite a seemingly non-existent (or at least *stable*) ego. Every Seer is ready to give advice to others on how to solve their problems and live virtuously - if they don't, or it's not appreciated, they are surprisingly patient in debates-bordering-on-arguments to get there. They rarely stray from the backline of groups, where even when tragedy meets them and theirs, Seers spend less time on damage control compared to bemoaning themselves for not seeing it coming. Despite this presumed importance of duty, Seers compensate professionalism with a notch of playfulness, making them more approachable and keeping them in the loop if they're still processing their thoughts (and because screwing with people is funny). They have a penchant for hanging around erratic or unstable people, keeping them on the right path as readily as they tell everyone else how to co-exist with them. It's a comfortable niche, and fulfills their call to action, but the brass tacks is that anyone that chronically problematic needs more help than a holding pattern of advice and lectures. If someone is intent to drive their life off a cliff (or into a crowd of people), Seers are prone to sit there in the passenger seat as the familiar voice that says "I told you so". Even self-preservation usually manifests as leaving without a word, when previous arguments gave too much slack in the hope someone's mind would change. Seers do not want to force anyone's hand, or draw unneeded attention to themselves, and any damage in this approach is preferable to the guilt of breaking routine.

Both Prophets are equally inclined towards simple appreciation and quiet surrender to one's Aspect, but Seers are interested in everyone else's place in the universe. By suggesting both optimization and restrictions, they subtly encourage Mage-like traits and worldviews: to **know** their Aspect as it pertains to everyone, rationalizing it as an undercurrent to all behaviors, neutral and inescapable. The comfortability of their (somewhat rambling) lectures speaks to this, and they know how to frame good news or bad news on their "unbiased" terms. If you've had a long day, if you've screwed up, if life won't let up, Seers can supply the quiet resolve of Mages to the people who really need it - and in turn, they see beauty in other people's lives, how they intersect and weave to make more than the sum of their parts. However, this also means that it's not very concrete or structured, and Seers struggle when pressed for clarity. While the outline is consistent, they play fast and loose with the details in order to stay relevant, highlighting the importance of levity so that curveballs do not invalidate them. To this end, their Aspect is evolving vageries; predictions phrased as fate, warnings phrased as advice, desires phrased as universal, admiration phrased as fact, resignations phrased as impossibilities, as the tide you

shouldn't bother fighting - at least, not without their help, and certainly not while they're not looking.

Couldn't tell you what the conditions are. "Clear assessments that no one's going to listen to anyways I guess" seems like the root, but...well, that's a decision a child makes, and can come from a variety of different circumstances. The only consistency I can find is that they didn't feel heard, but I suppose when that's your primary concern...

Rain or shine, Seers appear as nothing more or less than everpresent, confident guidance...but that's just what they want you to think. Mage-like confident stoicism is only apparent in their role as a people-oriented Passive Class, doubling as bluster to protect the personal vulnerabilities that do not fall under that category: embarrassing(?) hobbies, emotional indecision, and self-sabotage ranging from negligence to death-seeking. In what is going to be a pattern for Passive Classes, Seers clearly need the exact method of help they offer everyone else...but their method of processing this hypocrisy is to pretend it doesn't exist, arguing irrelevancy or exception. No matter how cherished their friends are, Seers will insist (with varying defensiveness) they are all unqualified to the task, which would be a waste of effort and resources anyways. Seers are a surprisingly competitive lot, but not to prove they're better than everyone else so much as smarter - and on that note, "playfully manipulative" is a subjective designation. Seers are downright invasive cataloguing everyone's incentives and sore spots, unable to play angel-on-the-shoulder without angles. All the while, there's still that buried selfishness, influencing Seers' direction and making them more erratic the less they can hide that's what's happening; that despite all efforts to present otherwise, they do not, in fact, have their shit together, or even your best interests at heart. All of this in mind makes it difficult to avoid disaster, leaving Seers prone to fall off the wagon while only struggling to do so quietly - disillusionment or doubling down is a coinflip. Seers do their best to stay two steps ahead of everyone else's issues and five steps ahead of their own, but often at the expense of knowing where they're going - like, say, off a cliff.

Homestuck's Seers (even borderline joke character Kankri) serve as suitable enough demonstration of what this all looks like; tune out the supernatural elements and, the fact is, addiction and toxic relationships are exactly the kind of thing to look for. Sure, the role of Seers can feel too tied to the convenience of fiction's need for expository characters, but I still *met* real Seers, and the blueprint holds true to bags of flesh and bones. Course, as is my usual problem with this document, even when you understand someone's problems, that doesn't automatically give you any solution to them.

Prosperit Seers genuinely believe in their method: they poke, question, suggest, console, and the world is (probably) a better place for it. They do all this casually, even implicitly, fostering their preferred social role (or even career) through little else besides following their nose. As they see it, they're just doing what needs doing, thinking little of these instincts beyond it's what a good friend or citizen ought to do. This earnestness ensures they have a rather static place in groups, where anyone who wants to listen to them is already listening, and anyone else knows what to expect. While it all

might come across as “one-note”, this is from intentionally embracing their role, and not from actual simplicity; you learn more about them from their hobbies, not their conversations, even if they’re explicitly trying to keep your attention somewhere else. This modest zealotry invariably leads to blindspots, making Prospit Seers unprepared for a lack of clear and clean solutions: the world is either simple, or it ought to be. Importantly, this sentiment extends to themselves, as while Prospit Seers are everything already discussed, they tend to genuinely believe their excuses that their baggage doesn’t - or *shouldn’t* - bother them. Personal interests and issues are deprioritized, sometimes admitted by accident in a tangent, all from someone more comfortable phrasing such things as if it was someone else’s emotions and ennui. There’s self-loathing between the cracks, but they’ll just stuff it deeper down with an “out of sight, out of mind” mentality that fools themselves as much as anyone else - and if it *doesn’t* fool you, it’s an uphill battle trying to broach the subject past Seer defensiveness running on autopilot. It might kill them someday, but if you really can get them to open up about it, then they probably think it already has in every way that matters.

Terezi is weird. Kankri is too, but less from eccentricity so much as, again, being a borderline joke character. While I keep some guesses on an old family friend, I did finally meet a self-admitted Prospit Seer. Admittidly, I may have mistakingly hallucinated “Derse” from that introduction, which fueled doubts they didn’t quite line up right with my model. Or maybe they’re not. Or this or that or why didn’t I get a real job?

Pop culture gives a rough shape, no clearer than the old cliché of “nosy girl reporter”, but picking a character from that archetype can still give said archetype too much influence, blotting out the subtleties of the real psychology while conditioning people to only recognize it in specific extremes. Honestly - and humor me on this one - *Breaking Bad*’s Mike seems a fit, and maybe RDR2’s Hosea if he’s not a Derse Seer. That “crime syndicate’s grizzled voice of reason” can seem odd to link next to aforementioned girl reporters should, hopefully, only reiterate how much stereo/archetypes can become increasingly foreign to the Classpect root it grew from (which is assuming I’m right on those in the first place). Certainly, expectations and fantasies of gender play into all that, with Seers being one of two Classes I know for damn certain aren’t locked...but, getting into all of those ramifications and contemplations could be its own friggin book.

Anyways, I’ll edit any worthwhile personal stories involving a Prospit Seer here when I’ve got one. Hopefully, even with so much secondhand, I can still help identify you or someone you know. Maybe I can do enough of a good job on the other entries to bank on the process of elimination...

Derse Seers don’t believe in the *method*, per se, but certainly the *results*; contradiction and compromise are strategies in a high-stakes game that not everyone realizes they’re playing, and maybe it’s best they don’t. Derse Seers speak with purpose, but deliberately weave double-talk and sarcasm through it that you might let your guard down; comedy, compliments, and criticism are all chosen tactically, from someone who isn’t even hiding that they’re up to something, only the *specifics*. Their observations and principles are more malleable, far more accepting of depressing outcomes and dysfunction as “just the way things are” - yet, obsessive to the opportunities they’re confident are in reach, where outright manipulation or self interest can still be writ as some “greater good”. The know-it-all superiority of Seers is clearer here, if only because all facets of the illusion

are consciously recognized, and purposefully oversaturating their image as “resident smartypants” reinforces that armor. Mind you, this doesn’t mean honest self-reflection so much as deeply engrained personal myths; to define *why* it’s so important they repress themselves and misdirect others, and how special their circumstances are that of *course* they can’t admit that to those that wouldn’t understand. Flip the spotlight and force it out of them, and it’s clear they’re not Mages: they might stammer and stumble, or lash out in a graceless, defensive aggression. If they can’t hide *or* deflect *or* rationalize being a codependent, directionless blabbermouth, then all that’s left is to play it for a laugh...but there’s not much to laugh about the longer you look. They probably know that - they probably always knew that. They just didn’t want you to know.

Tricky people. Even with Rose as a constant character for nearly the whole comic, it’s hard to see the generalized traits separated from her own singular identity - though, Naoto from *Persona 4* is pretty synch’d with Rose’s characteristics. Still, my knowledge of Seers is limited, so taking all those eccentricities at face value rather than oversaturation is hard to do until I see it in the flesh. Diane from *Bojack Horseman* is a good example of a more “normal” one, and even *God of War 4*’s Mimir - severed head and “smartest man alive” or not - demonstrates the Class’s qualities and methods with depth.

While I’m still sparse on definitive Prospit Seers, I’ve got more luck with Dersites, and one was a genuine close friend. I met her back in the punk house I used to live in; Hopebound and proud, helped keep the spirit of the place up and navigate the extreme personalities. Impatient with others, sure, but she always knew how to bounce back and persuade them in directions - or guilt, sometimes. I remembered her fondly.

I spent years working on this on and off, going about my life, before she and I crossed paths again - figured she could move in for awhile, catch her breath from some rough breaks. What followed was...horrible. Her just seeing what she could get away with, treating me like a mark, breaking promises and missing deadlines while her room filled with so much hoarded decomposing trash you couldn’t see the floor. I swear, she thought she was slick just because it made more sense to nod along rather than confront her constant, neverending stream of lies; I tried a heart-to-heart, and she acted like I shit on her porch. She was a human carwreck who lectured other people as a coping mechanism to pretend she didn’t need lectures herself - and that’s about as low as a Seer can get.

For all I’m going to write, there is a narrative creeping at the corners of it: that higher intensity Classes are all wild power mongers, and lower intensities are disciplined and modest. I do stand by many Classes being more dangerous risks than others...but, no matter the odds, “snake eyes” looks about the same across anyone. We are all shit as a species, and our ability to rise above and be decent is measured in margins.

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Unarmed by choice, a voice heard often as readily as unheeded, unneeded. To a village or nation, public or private, the one privy to the prophecies of all who meet those distant eyes; enchanted and enlightened, humbled and in service. To see how they live, struggle, die, all in the greater scope - twists of fate, connected and echoing, evolving and conspiring. You help them brace for it when they ask you to break it; soothe the nerves of the dually destined and doomed, longing for hope and help that won’t or will. Your hand guides the errant and erratic down a road with no forks - none worth it, at least, nor worth mentioning. If every card is face up, better tarot than poker, when you’re the only dealer with nothing your own to wager. The bluff becomes to convince people what the game is, lest ignorance outwit knowledge and

undo the distinction between - between you and every other mortal. The complacency of the learned beguiles the cacophony of what we want and are and will be, serving as no safety for the Seer's susceptibility. There is nothing sacred in weaving the strings of fate, nor sin in cutting them, or permanence to either; in witness to hubris, you were blind to your own. Prophecies are a promise as much as prediction, all as fragile as the one who peddles them...and, perhaps, just as powerful. You may not be made for crowns, but you can always coax its ear; it may not be your fight, but that doesn't mean it couldn't be, or that others won't fight yours. No matter how the future intimidates, no one need face it alone - not even you.

Go make your own decisions.

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MAGICIANS (GUIDES, TINKERERS, PRETENDERS)

Adapting an Aspect isn't so drastic as to warp and misshape it carelessly. At the first tier of it all, there's more you can accept than take issue with. Without meaning to do much, the rest is brought with it; simple and subtle, a spark of magic **changes** everything. Of course, magic is under scrutiny, and these two know that best; it's easy for them to assume they are frauds and charlatans, manipulating people under the pretext of care. To the wielder, it is most obvious what trickery and misdirection is employed...but there's always something that can't be explained, isn't there?

WITCHES are guileful innovators, finding a path forward from the sidelines or in the wake of others. Playful and imaginative, they enjoy the little things in life, and try to avoid drama or stress; however, they maintain a firm grip at the reigns of their own life, and don't budge easy to the wills of others (even if they pretend to). Curious and carefree whim is cultivated into their own little world to carry with them, to be shared with a handful of people they trust; it's not like they're *hurting* anyone (usually), it's just an idle apathy to unpleasant facts, often annoying those who found it so endearing under different circumstances. They bluff past a lot of obstacles in their life, readily lean on stronger voices, and almost always land on their feet. Witches come off as kind, agreeable, "cute", and altogether straightforward...and while *some* of this is true, Witches will readily deny any and all of it if they feel cornered. Dry resentment and unworthiness brim below the surface, built on unchecked assumptions, with pain placated by relationships and distractions. Witches will always have their own interpretation of how high the stakes are, of how genuine they were, of vapidness or hidden depths of those around them, and trying to directly poke holes in the inconsistencies of these speeches tends to make things worse.

Ultimately, the skewed truth is *their* truth, and it's as important for others to realize how vitally important it is to Witches as it is for Witches themselves to not undersell everything they're capable of.

Have to go harder on this one. Play all nice, and it's all surface. Not accurate enough. That's the thing about Witches, whether it's media examples or firsthand/secondhand experiences with them, everyone always misses the point, remembers them wrong, while Witches themselves encourage misinformation. It's a tragedy - their tragedy. So frustrating, but there's no easy way to take a swing without confirming everything they already assume. I'll be honest, I'm probably still too close to this.

It feels pertinent to mention I'm sticking by a rule of neutral language, both for gender-questioning types, and because I don't want to firmly claim Classes are all AMAB or all AFAB in the name of professionally acknowledging the potential for exceptions - despite the mounted evidence to the contrary. In case I haven't been clear, I don't think it *matters* if chromosomes link to Classes, and it feels damaging to progressive causes to argue that it is unacceptable if they do; that if such a thing were true, we lose the war. I bring this up because Witches appear, in 100% of individuals I have observed, to be AFAB only. Wiccans are just so goddamn popular in queer circles, I need to be *crystal clear* that anyone saying "Look at me, the AMAB Witch" might want to brace for disappointment. If you're trans, you're valid, and you can't let your Class turn into a burden you feel you need to shed just because of a couple of syllables. If you're a transman Witch feeling irked from the other side of things, I'd just swap the name to "Druid", but if you go for "Witcher" I feel I have to pre-emptively make a lengthy explanation for why Geralt of Rivea would not count (though the jury's out on Triss). TLDR: everything written here, because we're still talking about Class #3, first tier of Adaptation. Maybe there really is an exception out there, but don't get grumpy cause I won't offer easy answers - if this document does a good enough job letting you spot them, then you'll be prepared to spot yourself. Don't fuck with my flowcharts. Please. For your own sake.

Witches are not especially complicated, but they are *subtle*. Their instructions are a blend of expressing their interests, hiding their gripes, wrapped around Adapting to others expectations (or the expectations of others expectations). Yes, okay, fine, just calling it "playful curiosity" gets the point across, but it's a throughline they live their life by: to **change** their Aspect, adjusting what personally bothers them in the moment without ever straining themselves. While this might sound selfish (and can be), Witches do *want* to help their friends and make the world a better place. It can be exciting trying to share their insight and spirit, but it's a delicate thing; their influence stays in their bubble, and it's likely to pop if they reach out too far, or if anyone asks too many questions. Witches do their best work when it all seems straightforward, and that can make their skewed perception of stakes an advantage - to not overthink grand ramifications in the heat of things, dragged down by other's dramatics. A Witch's Aspect is whatever they need it to be, yet always a little more than that; distractions from fatalism, carefree trespassing, twitchy fingers, white lies, natural flow, romanticized tragedies, bittersweet contentment, games of mischief, unabashed compassion, customer service smiles, and a nameless mark on the world - always, forever and only, theirs.

Childhood environments vary, but the approach seems consistent: distractions, always, from issues they couldn't resolve. Could be boredom, loneliness, or abusive parents. Doesn't matter how bad it sounds, they'll walk it off - with a limp.

There are snags and schisms with Witches, but it's important to address them carefully; expecting them to fit a mold, or endure stress longer than they can, is so often what leads to arguments. Of course, Witches will

usually *attempt* to meet requests (real or imagined) initially, creating a self-fulfilling prophecy of broken masks, hyperbolic heartbreak, and floodgated fatalism as soon as they run out of stamina - the Witch-Spiral-Speech^(tm) of "I'm not who you thought I was, I can't be that person, and there's nothing left to say". Burnt bridges (real or imagined) only justify the instincts, meaning that while many people may know them, only a few get close. Witches hold the firmest grip deciding who sees their most genuine, private selves, and even more control deciding which *parts* of that self; illusion and truth are measured in percentages, always still with a secret they're prepared to die with. With this in mind, Witches are often most comfortable with those that fit their fantasies, who don't pry past what's offered, who accept their excuses of "I'm just being silly/I don't know what I'm talking about", and accommodate their perceptions of worthlessness rather than challenge it. There's only so far they can fall back on justifications of whim, human nature, or apathy, and they know that; Witches don't expect to be saved, forgiven, or understood by anything less than the hero they want - even if it's gutting to *lose* that status. Lashing out and demonizing Witches only feeds the self-hatred swirling at the root of it - and with that in mind, it's important to specify that Witches are *never* as bad as they say they are. They just want to exist, relax, and cause trouble on their terms; to be heard as an individual, with a legacy no greater than "fun" and "helped people who deserved it more". If they keep thinking there's no place for them, they'll keep running past all the ones they have.

It's hard to know what to say. I'm not a therapist, and there's no clean solution here. Maybe there never is, but I can't even pretend on this one, you know? Witches are tricky; I can't just say "be braver", "trust yourself more", "trust others more", or anything else you could stick on a bumper sticker. Sometimes the problems aren't problems altogether. Sometimes that's bullshit - sometimes that's just their bullshit, and they'll sort it or not sort it at their discretion. If they put all their trust in someone to define them, it's usually someone sketchy. I don't know. Every move feels like the wrong move. All I can really say here is, they're not alone. There's others with their archetype who've gone through all the same thrills, and all this "my friends would never accept these parts of me" thoughts aren't always true. At least, they keep trying to engineer scenarios that *make* them true, and I'm hurt seeing it happen over and over again.

You know, as far as personal rules go, I accept people making "bad" decisions so long as they're informed. Past all the showmanship, I just hope any Witch reading this becomes a bit more self-aware about what they're doing, and what their options are.

Prospit Witches are much more Sabrina than crop-killing monster. They're positive, polite, and idealistic; reality often meets them harshly, and not if they can help it. While they can be tricky to pin down in driving purpose, their track record often speaks for itself: happy hobbyists, an aura of amicability, casually opinionated, contextually careless. Their presentation is mirthful often despite their circumstances; maybe it feels like they decided a long time ago they didn't want to grow up, but it's a conscious decision made by a sober mind, and not held past the point of reason. They'll...*try* to stick it out for friends who ask too much or rub them the wrong way, but they also might ghost and hope no one notices. If this all sounds like sunshine, that's because it's designed to be; Prospit Witches are everything already discussed, but take every high and low in stride. Masks

will drop without fanfare, then snap back to their face as soon as the moment's bitterness is exchanged; misfortune is endured as long as no one else is getting hurt, alternatives writ off as "too much trouble". Their skewed stakes are not just preferred, but trusted, blossoming blind spots that always come back to bite later. Their health and heart are still very personal, and the rules on disclosure can seem (or be) inconsistent. They're prone to reestablish their walls and routines even if critical secrets are unveiled, simply refusing to acknowledge the lost status quo; press it, even with stated goals of building something better, and the Witch-Spiral-Speech_(tm) is still on the table. All in all, Prospit Witches are very good at hiding their scars (metaphorical or otherwise), but tend to be oblivious if those wounds are still bleeding - or they just stopped caring.

Jade Harley is weird. Good, but weird. Chixie from Friendsim, despite only having her Aspect off a notch, helps provide a more "grounded" example of a Prospit Witch. Honestly a good readily-available pop culture one is Nancy Wheeler of Stranger Things, for what that's worth. In my narrow sphere of interests (and I'd argue a pretty interesting one) is one of the later minds from Psychonauts 2, which goes the extra mile of making the Witch-Spiral-Speech the boss of that level. Uncanny.

That whole scenario reminds me too much of a friend of mine. I don't think I can show that friend what I wrote here, unless it's a hail-mary of me giving up trying to patch everything splintered between us. If you are reading this - and for all Prospit Witches in general -, I hope you take something from this for the future, even if it sounds more resigned than my usual writing.

Derse Witches are the ones to worry about, but usually more for their sake than yours. They're generally cheery, but not "optimistic", strictly speaking; they're matter-of-fact towards both the world's evils and their own, finding delights within the macabre rather than in spite of it. Appropriately, this compounds their sense of being an "other" to the world, making the dance of masks more intricate and articulated; they can range from dignified-yet-damaged sages, wild free spirits, apathetic sadists, or innocent brats. While all this lessens the chance of accidental (or blindly denied) self-sabotage, Derse Witches are prone to simply embrace the collision course: to live on the run, cozy up to volatile individuals, burn bridges within an hour of the transgression, and not look back and see which bad decision is going to be the one that finally catches up to them. More than seclusion, there is a pull to outright suicidal ideation: "You'll be better off when I'm gone", said with a smile, ready to rationalize the reactions it incites. Mind you, there's cracks in this bravado - compassion and hesitation that does not feed the narrative of "hedonistic blight" - but the threat of dropping the knife means they'll twist it to be taken seriously. If things seem fine, they'd like to believe it's because they did the mercy of lying to you...but if things *are* better than they seem, if everyone already *knew* the secrets, if there *is* a potential for uncompromised happiness, that doesn't mean they'll budge. It's never about direct problem solving, it's about trust - no shortcuts, substitutions, or second-tries.

Everyone knows her, even if you haven't met her. Long philosophical conversations, weighed down by addictions, screws her boyfriend's brother and dies before she's 40. She's sometimes in the

movies, but always in the songs; a diamond who wants to stay coal; the hitchhiker they call Hurricane; the girl who warns you not to fall in love with her.

I have a friend who's a Derse Witch of Space (she's the one who made the globe). It is charming how much she resembles Jade Harley, straight down to syntax, hobbies, and even dreams. It's more unnerving hearing her glee at messing with people's emotions and watching things unravel, or her equal glee reminiscing on a past of abusive and toxic lovers. I wouldn't trade her for the world.

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Wrinkle in the weave, walking barefoot in the woods, withdrawn from the workshops and windows of decent men and decent roads. Witches are infamous, segregated by purpose, but mutual curiosity makes meetings despite the warnings. Seeker or suitor, for malady or malaise, Witches provide panacea at a price. Light breaks through the canopy and illuminates illusions; concoctions and cantrips circumvent convention and certainties. Through it all, a wilt to the smile, a limp in the dance, a wonder past the weakness entices the woefully misinformed - the Witch cannot be saved, and cannot save you. Tinctures to numb, rituals to forget, shadows to hide, all methods of survival from a creature that would rather not be at all. Betrayal was always the deal, always followed by the lynch; "burn the Witch, the house, the woods", just to make you flinch. In the sum of their desperations, reflected off the smoke, the one they wanted - who never was, never could be. Your body, not your soul; your heart, not your mind. In ashes, maybe no one could tell the difference anymore, and maybe that's the kindness...and maybe it isn't. A bitter end fits the book, but forgets that you aren't fiction; if the truth is to disappoint, then kill closure with it. If they want a demon, be one that doesn't die; if they want a miracle, fix the real pain; if they want flesh, don't pretend it's anything else. The bygone truth of Witches is leaders, respected and revered, keen to the world not through privilege but patience. Pay attention to yourself, and realize you were half-right: you never needed saving in the first place.

Go cause some trouble.

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HEIRS are kind, compassionate, and defined by well-intentioned judgements; even if people don't agree, Heirs always find a way to get a word in without losing the room. They naturally slide into social groups, and quickly establish an environment where people look to them for support. They know how to communicate their thoughts effectively and without making things too personal, forcing people to reconcile themselves on their own terms rather than get caught up in a battle of egos. They don't like friends fighting, mediating disagreements in a variety of ways but always prone to a "I think what Steve is *trying* to say is..." hijacking. Altruistic, determined, and cherished, Heirs are, more often than not, all these things - but the one lie is "carefree". Underneath the "perfect friend" is someone

who thinks everything is going to go to shit if they don't administrate, and this solemn responsibility is both rarely admitted and rarely up for debate. Heirs avoid recognizing any grand conclusion their small interventions make, but that's as much humility as it is plausible deniability; no pride for praise, only in deciding everyone else's best available option every single time. Heirs almost always have a point, and they almost never have anything to gain - but if they don't or do respectively, they're "sticky" enough in arguments that you might doubt yourself. It's easy to misread an Heir's approach as a lack of confidence (and it might be a little), but often the *implication* of heirarchy is simply preferable. Heirs believe that they alone must be the one who will fix everyone else's problems, but past the legitimate ability and invisible arrogance, there's someone who doesn't know how to be anything else.

Homestuck has three Heirs, but under the variables of screentime and comedic absurdities, it can be hard to find similarities in their paths. Equius overthinks it, John underthinks it, Mituna doublethinks it - between the three of them, I get it if Heirs seem a little hard to define. I've known quite a few, and they were thankfully pretty open to invasive questions - if suddenly hesitant the moment I try to draw conclusions. Not "defensive" just...it's overprotective is all, you know?

Heirs are diligent, despite often coming off as docile. Their programming is simple enough: "make things better for people", with their Aspect as a series of nebulous and malleable guidelines. This doesn't mean they're lazy, far from it; Heirs are a living counterbalance, becoming increasingly motivated, protective, and even controlling when they feel the situation requires it. This call to action is subtle enough that it can be the only reason they speak up and get creative at all, making their autonomy as individuals completely intertwined with their sense of purpose: they **change** their environment with their Aspect, but also **change** themselves into what they think the world needs them to be. This is drawing from the same mask-making tools as Witches, but zero'd in on direction and damage control, being that it is *""supposedly""* seperated from their wants and biases. Despite all of this, they frequently don't know what's so special about themselves specifically, when it's more obvious from the outside how their track record creates an outline of what they bring to the table. Their Aspect is their curious questions, their double-checking, their helpful reminders, their 11th hour miracles, the rare heated argument, the calm hand of suggestion, what they've got under control, the possibilities that can't be ruled out yet, and the eternal well-spring of solutions that truly does feel like an inherited birthright sometimes.

"Chosen One" indeed, but not because they actually *are* destined - the dragon existed before the prophecy. More bluntly, all signs point to an Heir's childhood environment locking in their habits, as they grew up having to be the parent that no one else was being, but *someone* clearly had to be. Even with Homestuck's own, it's easy to see how John and Equius politely argue with the traditions threatening to swallow them (even if Equius seemed to cave at the end). It also explains resentments Heirs often have towards that responsibility, as it was always an emergency situation - something that shouldn't happen twice in a just world. Pity it sticks. Pity they're so good solving everyone else's problems, that people actually *will* ask them to keep doing it despite the damage. And they can. We are so often at the mercy of our delusions.

There is a downside to the rush of endorphins that come with rising to the challenge and saving the day - eventually, you win, and you're no longer needed. To an Heir's credit, they generally (hopefully) don't directly incite trouble just to play savior, but that makes it a bit more subtle; it means letting people know "I'm always here to listen", and never turning *down* codependency; it means never saying a crisis is 100% resolved, leaving the door open for relapse; it means casting vague doubts if something's done without the Heir's magic touch, implying only one final seal of approval; it means planting themselves in center of very toxic dynamics, being everyone's shoulder to cry on. Heirs have an alarming addiction to "loops" like these, where they're placating a crisis rather than closing it. It's hard for anyone (even them) to notice, since they're reflexive in framing arguments in other people's "best interests" - and who's to say comfort isn't a substitute for solutions anyways? The cracks are slow, but inevitable: problems they can't solve, idle hands, or pure stressed-out exhaustion. When something finally breaks them, Heirs are finally confronted with their *own* baggage...and that isn't something they're prepared for, or want any help with. Who they were feels "fake", leaving them to drift off and seclude. They might be back in a month. Or a decade. Or never.

John suddenly becoming depressed and Equius suddenly becoming useless weren't really surprises - it was an inevitability ticking down from the moment they existed. It's just as inevitable in real life. It's very difficult getting them to brace for it - hopefully, through this document or whatever else, not impossible.

...There is something to be said about *Spec Ops: The Line*, and the character of Captain Martin Walker. Something, perchance, more pertinent than teenage angst.

Prospit Heirs might be frustrating sometimes, but they're hard to stay mad at. Preferring to live life on autopilot, they perform all an Heir's duties of questioning everything without questioning their habits, and keep the mood light in all moments inbetween. They don't overthink their advice, don't get caught up on grand consequences, and also don't tend to think they can be wrong - at worst, what's a few harmless questions and words of warning? They prefer free-wheeling through volatile situations, ignoring what might be difficult to comprehend and only focusing on resolving what *does* make sense. They're good listeners, but a little sour if they aren't making any headway with people, which makes them more likely to quit if they get too frustrated - at least, until the topic gets brought up again. While Prospit Heirs are never *truly* ignorant of the conniptions, affirming it without acknowledging it can make them surprisingly dangerous; overstepping boundries, overtrusting instincts, and outright infantilizing friends can happen casually. Much like Prospit Witches before them, they'd prefer to stick to their routines even if something serious happens, and can be stubbornly resigned if no one plays ball. Confrontations can lead to denial, withdrawl, or simply addressing symptoms and not the root - which is, of course, still a time-bomb of an Atlas Complex. When their patience finally wears thin, their tempers surprise even them; too much feels unfamiliar and

alien, unworkable, all at once. There's alot bottled up, and they're not measuring the breaking points.

In a great deal of media, Prospit Heirs are the "generic protagonist hero". Much like Witches and the "girl next door" archetype, it's an (A)ctive effort to keep up, and only fiction can provide the mask without the motive. I'm inclined to mention Zagreus of *Hades*, as while certain-nincompoops-I-argued-with-online-years-ago may take his "Prince of the Underworld" title as proof of a synonymous Class, I swear he's a pitch-perfect Prospit Heir of Blood, displayed with a wide range of emotion and nuance. Of course, that makes him an interesting mirror to John: the Aspects reversed, but a bumbling shoulder-to-cry-on all the same.

Egbert himself, Homestuck's leading man (or woman, w/e), can be difficult to read past "comedic dork", and their gradual depression and lack of energy going forward in the story can feel out of left field. It isn't. My own brother is a Prospit Heir of Breath, and, while grumpier, he's done all the same things for all the same reasons, straight down to drifting away from people (and, on a more comedic note, preferring hammers in Monster Hunter, and installing trainers and debug modes for every game we play). Guy puts himself in too many bad situations; I feel guilty knowing I was one of them, growing up. He forgives me. I'm relatively certain he'd do that regardless of how sorry I was.

Derse Heirs are therapists who need therapists. Careful on what would tip things too far or be too bold to say, Derse Heirs hold their tongues, believing recklessness breeds catastrophe. They're good at what they do, but are the most prone to throw themselves too far into impossible goals with a martyr's masochism - content only in chaos and toil, proving themselves through bleeding hands and broken spirit. Too often they fear their friendly face is a fraudulent facade, only a mask to their violent impulses and desire to control others, only held back through self-control. They're calm because they believe the world needs them to be calm; beating the shit out of someone (who probably has it coming) violates their presentation, despite being a part of their most honest self. The explosive components of their personality are consciously recognized, and the proccess of holding themselves together so they can hold everyone else together is often internally mythologized. Much like Derse Witches before them, they'd like to believe your comfort is because they did you the mercy of lying to you; also like Derse Witches, there's still alot of kindness that doesn't fit their narrative of "manipulative tyrant". If they walk away from it all, they'll have reasons why they can't go back, but it's usually still reflecting someone trying to frame it for everyone else's benefit and not "I don't want to." Getting them to open up with all their pain, philosophy and politics is something you either do in a safe enviroment, or something they do alone - and it'll *always* be messy.

Equius is...interestin'. Weird society, weird kid, and he knows that. Also, a kid - Derse Heirs seem to round out more as they go along. Would've been nice to see more of that. Poor guy. Top 5 characters, I swear.

I knew a very close friend who always had Heir traits. I never really understood how much goes through their heads until he gave me a shot with all this, letting me put Equius next to his traumas and secrets, comparing and contrasting ("Inherit Nothing" is such a good song). It's helped me see all this more clearly, and I hope you will too. Failing that, watch *Steven Universe Future*.

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A world in chaos, mired in misfortune, draped in darkness. Sickness spreads in body and spirit, as broken souls wait for a cure that walks; in tales and song, in myth and prophecy, a hero built entirely of expectations. It doesn't matter if you seek them, or they seek you; it doesn't matter if you live among luxury or lumber; it doesn't matter if you were stolen from birth awaiting this day, or remain baffled at a bloodline too ancient to remember. All that has ever mattered - to those that decide such things - is the sole spark that pulls swords from stones, rallies armies, and fights the darkness. Through you, it will all come to pass...but evil is beaten but not broken, people unite but do not trust, and you lead without a crown; peace today, but what of tomorrow? Miracles made manifest puts doubts to rest, unless one has the hands that did it; superstition salivates for a savior, and settled for smoke and mirrors. The Heir inherits boon and burden both, unable to tell the difference behind an invincible smile and a broken brow. In stalemate, survival; what is a warrior without a war? The script calls for more than you are prepared to give, but to see it as a curse only hides it is a crutch: the stories are smoke, but the flesh and deeds still stand. The fighter, the diplomat, and everything else; a free will so autonomous it believed itself automatic. In truth, evil will win sometimes, good men will scatter, if either was good or evil to begin with. The stories guaranteed nothing, only you did - as did everyone around you. If you are not a slave to superstition, than those that follow won't be either, even to real magic. So rule and reform, war till' everything bleeds, flee to new frontiers, or walk a hundred paths between. All that has ever mattered - to you, who decides such things - is to do it right.

...But hey, that's just my advice.

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TIER 1 RIVALS: PROPHETS AND MAGICIANS (FOOTSIES)

Tier 1 of intensity, taken as a whole from all sides, is, in a word, 'subtle'. They are all Classes who either don't rock the boat, or figure the fastest way not to bother people is swim. That, if they *do* need to make some noise and cause a scene, it is only as much as they deem necessary, and they'd prefer if you didn't fight their definition of it. Of course that can be a buncha' bunk, but leave it to these guys to insist there's nothing to discuss. Tier 1 is an absolute as much as Tier 4, creating certainties without dogma, and force without noise. It is worth as much respect as wariness, even if it's not the biggest red flag in this document.

Mages and Witches equally prefer their isolation. Sure, they can have people close, but even a soulmate can't break all their walls; can't undo all that's **lonely** about their existence, let alone how little it bothers them. They do what they want to do how they want to do it, and if you got a

problem with that, that's *your* problem to have. Compared to all that comes later, their egos are - however well-fed, however favoured - not *engorged*. Positions of power and worship are recognized as more trouble than they're worth, generally only held by stumbling into it; that fun among friends turned into a job, small deeds escalated while they weren't looking, or all the hassle of being *born* into responsibilities with load-bearing consequences on everyone else (which they still might bail on). Even as they diverge, carried by the resolve of **known** beliefs or the creativity of **changing** ones, it's an equal amount of force pushed in opposite directions. As will become a pattern going forward, the Attuned Aspect is a little... 'pushier', than it's Adaptive rival. Mages are clearly motivated to their stubborn convictions, but Witches put in more effort to duck around confrontation. Mages might say they don't care what anyone thinks, but they're certainly straightforward about what they think; Witches are much more content to let people think what they want, be that in resignation or a trickster pride. Even to all the criticisms made of Mages being self-righteous, it's the direct opposite to Witchy self-destruction, equal in the tranquil rationalization of it all: that Mages will keep on keeping on while the world lets them down, and Witches will let you down while the world goes on without them. Neither wastes effort imagining alternatives.

Seers and Heirs are both **guiding** presences to those around them, whether or not they have everyone's best interests at heart. At their best, on a good day, they're the Passive Classes who can most easily pretend that's not a job; some jokes, some advice, a little mix of affirmations and criticism, all performed naturally enough that you might miss it's all carefully measured. Still, as mentioned in their respective sections, Seers and Heirs can nakedly display how serious they believe the game they're playing with the world is - even if it's not clear if this is dropping the facade, or putting one on. Tier 1 calm certainty does a lot to bind them to the notion that this is work that needs doing, even if there's not clear end-goals in mind; gentle nudges are the safe bet, trusting people to Do The Right Thing, and trusting further that everyone is in agreement of what that is. When push comes to shove, it's the Adaptive voice that falls through first...which is to say, Heirs don't need much to suddenly decided diplomacy is over, and they're going to get their hands dirty. Seers dig in harder to maintain their presuppositions of 'unbiased wisdom', to the point of being obstinate in admitting any condescending venom isn't very dignified - or subtle. At the breaking point, both Classes still struggle with communicating their own baggage, ever-tempted to seclude away in their own disassociated spirals. Heir brooding is, ultimately, the same as Seer shriveling - mechanically, emotionally, pitifully.

I like to think it stops being dirty laundry when it's uniform to a dozen people, and then a dozen more contact you and say it was their own as well. If it's not, I'm damned.

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SERVANTS

(SOLDIERS, ROADIES, SLAVES)

Simply researching the Aspect is one thing, but it's not going to be enough for everybody. Following the rules for the sake of itself can seem a waste - why bother if you wind up right where you started? How hard do you have to work before the system pays off? Isn't this Aspect supposed to be "good", not just "comfortable"? The Servants trade intuition for initiative, fitting their Aspect to **guard** those in need, and defend the Aspect itself from that which would compromise its purity. It's important to recognize this weaponization of their beliefs isn't wholly practical - certainly, still on Attunement and not Adaptation. Idealism dictates their expectation that the system should be fair, functional, and "feel right". In the face of setbacks, they default to blaming themselves as the "weak link", enduring (and exaggerating) obligations put upon them. Crucially, this struggle with application makes the definition that much more unstable. Without a Prophet's eye, Servants can wind up with others defining their Aspect for them, or not catch themselves playing far more pragmatically than they advertise themselves to be; friends and problems are both far more contextual than can be easily admitted. Life is chaos, but where the Prophets could see that itself as parity, it's an ordeal to force that same chaos into something *favourable*. Organized, optimized, brick by brick until it's "right" - then collapsed, when "right" stops making sense anymore. That's fine. Back to blueprints. Someone's gotta do it.

"Serve" fits the myth explicitly, but it misrepresents the fine details, implying "subservience" to people who can too easily be tricked into thinking that's all they can do. "Give" is a better antonym to "Steal", but, loses the more determined resolve in the task. "Exploit" is clunky, but it better acknowledged the odd split between the loyalty and all the endless tinkering, trying to smooth things out from the inside. Someone suggested "Guard"... and that hits every note it has to. "Protect" might be cleaner, but permit me a certain personal flourish, wouldn't you? Word on the street is Hussie and their crew went with "preserve", so I'll rest easy knowing we hit a synonym, even if "Guard" has a bit more pizzazz.

PAGES are wistful dreamers, quick to apologize and quick to offer help to anyone around them. Caught between a willful naivete and a fastidious paranoia of failure, they commonly exhibit a stop-and-start confidence; charismatic promises, held at the heel by ceaseless second-guessing and diplomatic concessions. They're attracted to romanticized stories of heroes and saviors, either emulating them (conditionally) or becoming attached to exciting people in their lives. These fascinations fit to narratives that the world rewards those who walk a path of virtue - intuitive and true, bold and righteous, the potential for which lies in the heart of every man. This obviously isn't how the world works (let alone in 12 mutually-exclusive directions of Aspect), but, if it isn't their duty to reveal this world, surely it must be to build it. In the margins, victory is counted in silver linings and technicalities; at the apex, maxims and mantras meant to inspire the little

guy and dare cynics; always, at every step along the way, drawn to opportunities to do something dramatic, ill-advised, and *painfully* sincere. The brunt of this weight breaks Pages into punching bags, but never one that says die; that all their idol worship never stops being projection, wrought from a mind that would *love* to be the center of attention, but only as much as they can justify it. Stubbornly opinionated behind their bashful exterior, Pages are on a long journey to untangle themselves and find the confidence to say everything they ever felt needed saying. This means continually experimenting with their presentation, trying to find the right approach, ruleset, and knowledge to align their principles with a world they're tentative to confront. They may eventually find their confidence, embodying an impossible larger-than-life persona...or, spend the rest of their lives living in the shadow of who they wish to be.

Important disclosure: I am a Page.

Mages and Pages are related to each other like T-Rexes and chickens: understandable, once you get past the insult. They share identical fundamentals, in being individuals who study their Aspect to align with its principles, invoking what does good and making peace with what doesn't. Yet, raising the stakes - the ambition, the responsibilities, the alienating purity of dogma - dislodges Pages from their own self-identity, prone to project it elsewhere until they work up the will to claim it back. So to say, Pages start **guarded** from their Aspect, until they earn their place on the other side of the shield: to **guard** the vulnerable, shaping their Aspect into equal parts code of honor and plan of attack. Unfortunately, engineering this skillset and persona is a long process, where the cliched milksop routine is equal parts "holding pattern until a better personality is finished" and "trial run in a safe environment". The lines between bravery and overconfidence, diplomacy and submission, patience and cowardice, all need answers that *work*, and under a only-so-malleable constraint of "fair". Of course they'd love a mentor to make that process smoother - of course they'd love to *be* one too, and pay it all forward. But in consolation, concession, and confrontation, every effort is tongue tied by personal principles. Whether spoken out loud or not, whether they like it or not, Pages **guard** their Aspect from that which would diminish it: not playing fair, or not putting the work in. Fundamentally, Pages do not serve people, but their gut, mythologizing their fantasies and frustrations into labours and law. Their Aspect manifests as idle pretend, reassuring mantras, coaxed inspiration, righteous paths of virtue, bumper sticker wisdom, irrational sticking points, indignant outbursts, eccentric flourishes, and (if they get their shit together) the superhero bravado of their ideal self.

Many years ago, in the shitty friend group of teenagers I belonged to, there was a shared passing interest in Homestuck. We saw Tavros once, and there wasn't a note of disagreement amongst us that I, too, was a Page. It wasn't meant with much seriousness - but I suppose it nagged at me that I didn't have a counter-argument.

I did move on with my life, but I took some of it with me. In retrospect, probably a terrible decision. Still, in all the proxy humiliation of Homestuck's three Pages, the denotation of "The most powerful Class" stuck with me. "Potential" is an alluring thing, I suppose. A promised resolution to all the failure that followed me like a curse - or rather, the failure I denoted, adherent to the goalposts my father beat into me.

I believe wholeheartedly that Classpects are our trauma - or, at least, our childhoods. 11/12 Pages will not share my slant to violence, but they're still plagued by teeth-gnashing dreaming on what-could-be. Something caught their eye as a kid, or was pushed on them by their elders, and it just never quite left. Too much time spent alone, lost in their thoughts, trying to figure out what the right ones to think are. For some, "Most powerful Class" sounds like a pity gift of consolation to the miserable - but I know what fully realized Pages look like. Polite, diplomatic, verbose, theatric, terribly eccentric formal wear, mindful of every nuance. Deliciously enthusiastic about disarming a man on rules-lawyering technicality, but tender and patient with inspiring folk to be their own best self. Some people see that swagger and think they were born like that (or say "Lord") - but they weren't. They couldn't be. It takes the milksop over-worrying about every little thing to ever *be* the guy who *can* accomplish every little thing; to patiently forgive themselves and others when it can't be done, but still give it an honest try before they ever rule it out.

...I hope, from time to time, I count. But I've been doing this long enough to know that your worst days never stay behind you.

Pages are always looking forward, and forging a confident persona to press through their doubts never stops being an objective...but even if they haven't noticed, the over-apologizing bundle of burden is *also* a manufactured persona. The impossible fantasy of their ideal self intimidates, enshrining everything under its shadow; compromises between passion and pragmatism blur both into a glassy artifice, leaving Pages in a permanent state of theatre. Reality can become distorted to the point that Pages blot out competing narratives, and while they'll flagellate themselves for failures (even ones other people attribute to them), they have a huge blind spot when *they* are the aggressor; what they failed *and* what they wanted are equally sanctified. Selfishness and slights get wrapped up with moralizing, where Pages can see themselves as the tragic victim who deserves sympathy, accommodation, or someone else's girl (or whoever). Resenting this part of their brains is not the same as killing it, and it's often in the midst of self-loathing Pages will cave to impulse; a lifetime of agony trying to win an impossible race, they think stealing the prize might be their only option. On the other hand, confidence does not guarantee anything genuine: Pages are prone to downplay their transgressions, smoothing everything over as necessary, negligible, inevitable, or justified - rotating these motives only highlights insincerity. Fact is, Pages like getting what they want and making that sound like a good thing for everyone *they* get swept up by big stories and triumphant idols. Fantasies of who they could be and how the world should be are seductive as the sirens, and about as liable to drown everyone involved.

I have problems. Most days, I have them under control, even if they never truly go away. I've had a lot of people gaslight me over the years, and I know that makes me predisposed to mimic it on top of natural Page scheming worm bullshit. I don't always know when it happens, but I'm better when I do, and better when I act in a way I won't have to make excuses for it. There's enough stories about Pages where they find that confidence and become a proper hero - but I've met some sad, schemey old men who haunt me in every way I find them familiar. I'm liable to mention the Riddler from *Gotham*, but his sins don't outweigh a villainous charm. Barry (*Barry*) is more directly humbling, and nothing goes lower than Lou Bloom from *Nightcrawler*.

That Witch of Space pal of mine brought up how often sexual conquests or obsessions make up Page thought. She's on to something, but I wouldn't call it a rule - there's an asexual Page out there somewhere, I'm sure. It *is*, however, a good example of how reliably the Page brain hypes itself up into only doing what it wanted to do in the first place.

Prospit Pages are probably the first thing that popped into your head when I was describing all this. Innocent, well-meaning, polite, with only pristine visions of a world where nothing bad ever happens and everything works out for everyone. Still marred by poor self-esteem, they're more *confused* anyone sees potential in them rather than anything else - which can make them slow to accept change, waiting on a miracle rather than being practical. They try to live in accordance with law and order, but also miss when that blurs with their own principles; they're difficult to reason with if they've been properly riled up, as rare as that is to happen. More often than not, they're simply polite and lost in their own little world, wildly enthusiastic about their hobbies and interests to the point of overwhelming people who listen. While they frequently apologize for rambling (or during it, if they can't stop themselves), these are all the hallmarks of a Page still holding themselves back. The funny thing is, if they *do* get their act together, it's equally as comfortable: charming, cheery, charismatic, averse to conflict and dignified in admitting fault, all so natural you'd think they were born that way. Of course it's still theatre; still the efforts of a flawed human aspiring to be aspirational, which will always leave cracks and artifice when they're out of their element. Either they can own it and use it to better empathize with those around them...or, pull back into the habits that "work" and try to sweep all that inconvenience under the rug. It's dependent on the person, let alone if they even make it that far in the first place.

Homestuck's got plenty of Pages, and they're primarily Prospits; Tavros and Jake, sure, but there's also a more buttermilk-sour example in Zebede from *Friendsim*. Anime's got plenty anywhere you look, and I try not to begrudge myself too hard for not looking at *Gurren Lagann* sooner. Sure, Deku from *My Hero Academia* is already a more dignified Page of Hope than Homestuck ever allowed Jake to be, but Simon is a cut above. The deepest lows of despair, to peaks I didn't fathom...and yet, never outside the range of possibility, in all a Page fundamentally is. The final scene of the show really hit me - and if it did for you too, Page or not, you should hold on to that.

Just as whimpering but with the added attribute of "*wicked*", **Derse Pages** are pressure cookers ready to either make a diamond or crack one. They're guarded, stressed, wracked with self-loathing, and treat every setback as proof they're outright cursed. Often erratically anxious assistants, they waver between reclusive despondency, or "sick of your shit but still going to fix it" direct action. They are overwhelmed by their compulsions as much as their self awareness to how irrational it all is...but there's work that needs doing, people that need helping, and any resignations that "someone more qualified should be here" can't hide a competitive pride that, if they're *not* that guy, they still *could* be. They are more prone overall to manipulation or treachery, as these are not breaks from their code entirely, but rather parts (not all) of the code itself. They tend to root for ~~the bad~~ guys fellow

outcasts, inclined to see, if not valour and dignity itself, then at least potential for it (to the point of fooling themselves). While prone to find diplomatic language for their most controversial strategies, Derse Pages will still stuff down their most unjustifiable thoughts and “sanitize” themselves, which only makes for worse crimes when something snaps or no one’s looking; if they don’t make it heroic, it’ll only ever be hedonistic. They can spin half of that into a more devious image, but what’s accepting your inglamorous qualities, and what’s just resigning from the possibility of being better? Prone to cheat companions as much as assist their aggressors, as enraptured by the nobility of their Aspect as tempted by its excesses, the road to glory can get *awfully* crooked...

Don’t look at me like that.

Horuss - for as brief his appearances - hit close to home. Same for Xefros of Hiveswap fame (whose abusive best friend was...uncanny). Look, you ever see a moody little sadsack like Shinji from Evangelion and wanna shake him because you know he’s underselling himself...I mean, you ever wonder where that stubbornness is coming from? Pages only learn the lessons we *want* to learn, and we’ll tough through any lecture with the pent-up resentment that we still haven’t had our chance to speak. Maybe we blow it. Maybe we’ve got nothing good to say, and it’s all as selfish as we keep loudly worrying it is. Just don’t think the help we need is anything you can jam into us with enough force - we’re the “most powerful Class” for a reason.

Actually, you know who’s a fantastic example? Chidi, of The Good Place. Sure, he’s got the whole journey down, but Kant’s philosophy feels the important takeaway; “acting in accordance with what you want to be a universal law” and all that. It’s not suggesting that never lying will stop lying, only that it can be personally fulfilling - and isn’t believing in “universal laws of virtue” what Pages are all about?

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Modest, honest, meager, eager - a face form fit for all manner of boots, irregardless of intent. A childhood traded for a headstart on trades; a promise there will be a seat at the table, after an eon of scrubbing it. The masters and artisans, the noble exemplars of house and hold, all sure to return generosity given; that one might shine their shoes and see if they fit, and carry their capes while mimicking their stride. Patience, patience, a Page’s first virtue; the first brick of the long road, paving over all the mewling weakness. How inept the mind, how feeble the gait, how utterly unprepared to distant dangers. To sew and cook and dance and hunt and build and toil - to fail, all of it, every promise, as dead weight struggles to justify itself at the low bar of sycophant. Still, there’s a safety in pity, and the runt is not without guile; any suggestion lands better from a lesser, sating little sins behind the smile. Guilt grows for every soul worse off, that you and the system let fall - but doubt weighs heavier, that your transgressions are exceptions at all. The greatest deceit of Pages was the first: that nobility is noble, and power fair. The glare of gold hides that men rust far easier, too petty and temperamental to measure up to their own marble. Corrupted by compromises, can’t comprehend what they’ve squandered, can’t admit they’re cowards - can you? Or was it all prey to predator, one more hypocrite, better only in ability to bedazzle and embezzle? Maybe...but you

were a sucker once too, weren't you? Maybe that was better - maybe you had it right the first time. Steel can be sharpened, ruin can be repaired, men can be trained; not failures, just far from fruition, so follow a friend who finds it all familiar. Real power is not taken, it is shared; it is noble and fair and kind. The promise is yours to keep Page, because whether you'd sell it or serve it, your perfect world doesn't exist - not until you build it.

Show them what you're made of.

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KNIGHTS are loyal, resolute, tough, and humble - though you might doubt that last one, if you don't notice insincerity in any self-aggrandizing. They naturally drift into becoming the fulcrum for friend groups (with slight favourites), handling tasks most would find monotonous or stifling. They share a Page's flair for self-deprecating theatrics, but often meant to playfully (or aggressively) annoy rather than endear. Whether it's casual socializing or dire situations, Knights specialize in bravado and persona - they do not show weakness, and do not bring down the mood with their own problems. While they frequently double down on their walls and defenses when pressed for honesty, they do have speeches ready for those moments. Hear it from them, and they'll say that this is their burden to bear, all they're allowed to be, so someone else can shine brighter...but, these are the lies of someone who isn't the main character of their own life. Cracks always appear eventually, as the Knight lifestyle is inherently unsustainable, both from stress and the idealized "standard" that never was. Selfless sacrifice is noble, but a dangerous default, and respecting them for the struggle only distracts from the fact that they don't have to. Rules and restriction drive them forward, but limits their potential; they fight a battle they do not expect to win, but they absolutely *can* as soon as they believe they deserve to.

I swear Latula is the most functioning Knight in Homestuck, and most of that is just being REALLY GOOD at pretending everything's fine. Look, if this entry sounds harsh, it's that I don't want to romanticize hurting yourself so everyone else is okay - even if Knights do good, it should never be at the cost of their soul. They all think it has to.

Seers, as you may recall, muster a selfless persona to bluster through their own indecision and petty schisms. Knights are an amplification of the persona, elevating advisement into assistance, but also amplify what the persona is meant to hide; a double-edged blade of belligerence and worthlessness. As such, Knights wield their Aspect to **guard** the vulnerable - which does *not* include themselves, because either they think they can take it, or don't care that they can't. Dutifully (if trying not to make it sound like a big deal), Knights speak and demonstrate their Aspect only to the benefit of those around them, to the point of ascetic self-sabotage just to make sure they're not being selfish (read: happy). The same way that a

Page's brain hypes their own casual desires into virtuous tasks, a Knight's brain tries to enshrine *everyone else's desires* as the Knight's duty to fulfill. This results in huge miscommunications and resentment because **Knights are not psychic, and frequently not emotionally honest enough to learn (LET ALONE GUESS) what their friends want, or how they want it done, if at all.** If(/When) things blow up in their faces, Knights are predisposed to arrive at one conclusion: whether broodingly serious or stressfully annoyed, they resign that their only problem was optimism. Appreciating the poetic purity of their Aspect, but wary of those that would misapply it, a Knight can **guard** their Aspect from the reckless who expect too much - after all, they know from experience. To a Knight, their Aspect is a hammer, and the world quickly proves to have too few nails. It's their take-it-or-leave-it problem solver, their code of honor, their favourite joke to cheer you up, your ticket to the big leagues, the rules at their expense, the god they appease, the chain holding them down...and, often, it's the qualities they project onto other people, who somehow "deserve" it more.

Always similar parents. Have whatever happy conversation you want, they clam up when their folks are around - speak when spoken to, no acting out of line. Classpects are trained into us; no matter how bizarre or disconnected from reality a Knight's compulsions seem, they were law at some point in their lives before. It helped them survive. Once.

Knights can and will do alot of good, but they have to teach themselves how to do it without hurting themselves. It's hard for them to express affection as anything less than falling on their sword, and they'll have a hundred explanations for why the universe *somehow* requires them to suffer in order to function. Mind you, they're not always the victim; Knights can bring their pain with them, and struggle to force their surroundings into the battlefield they want to die in. It means seeing mundane friends as perfect hero leaders to follow with unquestioning devotion, helpless damsels to be protected, and tyrants who oppress them. They'll get mad because suggestions or casual requests are *felt* as do-or-die commands, and the Knight wants validation for their toil - and in the worst cases, *payment*. Just as likely the Knight won't say anything, continuing to willingly volunteer at chores and busywork because it's their "secret burden". If the emotional toll wears them down, if people disappoint (or just confuse) them, if their framework *shatters*, most throw in the towel. They can sulk and say they failed, try to start over with more damage, or they can become hatefully bitter at the entire concept of goodwill - life is nothing but broken promises to them now. Knights will put you on a pedestal, and it's alarming how much temper and desperation they'll display if you try to leave...and how much they want *you* to be mad if *they* threaten to leave.

If we're being entirely honest, Dave Strider's mental breakdown could've been alot worse.

Prosperit Knights are not, strictly speaking, "laid-back". They may pretend to be, or openly mention they'd prefer to be, but their rules still have them in a vice. As inflexible as they are, they're the least likely to crack; they're

content with their chosen level of stress, and their bluster or self-deprecation never completely overtakes their ability to have a rational discussion. This does mean that while they're the least likely to consciously recognize they have problems, they are the most likely to admit it - but again, not really looking for "solutions". Letting someone else take the lead is very natural for them (to the point they may not want to admit it), but they're not above backtalk and not immune to open disrespect, making them prone to a "backseat driver" kind of criticism. If they do snap, it's not as sudden; you can often see the gears turning as they talk, liable to mention when they're running out of patience for people (just not if you ask directly, then it's "fine" again, because that's the "correct" response). Letting all the rudeness out and deciding if they're going to burn a few bridges (or all of them) is bound to happen eventually. It might be a half measure where they're still unconsciously empathetic and respectful despite their words...and it might *not* be.

Karkat's tricky - even Hussie admitted his lifestyle in a hostile and totalitarian world really warped his perceptions, making his personality a bit of a deviation. Still, one has to admit that he is clear about how he feels about any given situation; no one said "fucking pissed" isn't a valid interpretation of Prospit honesty. Latula feels a more general example, and looking to media winds up with a lot of *literal* sidekicks.

All of that aside, I'm pretty sure one of my uncles qualifies - but I won't say more. He's got his demons, and it wouldn't be fair to pretend I understand them, let alone glibly retell it all. Fairly certain he's Hopebound, but, while that makes for an accurate blueprint, there is always still more to a person; not that the flowcharts are wrong, just, that when you're living it, who cares what's a cliché or not?

Derse Knights will die for you when the cards are down, but will do a lot to make sure you wouldn't expect them to. Their Knighthood is perceived in the grimmest lens of suffering and sacrifice, as they are but a worthless wretch to be sacrificed and forgotten about - but this is rarely spoken out loud. In a good 95% of situations, Derse Knights are an impenetrable wall of antagonistic jokes, deflections, and relentless "class clown" harassment. While this sadism often reflects legitimate irks and indignation, it also encourages the poor reputation they believe they deserve...or at least, it's *supposed* to. Derse Knights struggle to find a goldilocks zone of abuse - given and taken - which either shoves away friends who show patience, or wears them down trying to co-exist with the truly cruel. While humour can soften some of these blows, it also makes distinguishing touchy subjects a guessing game; sullen bitterness or explosions of temper can seem random, while Derse Knights act like it should have been obvious where their lines were drawn. These harsh constraints and contradictions have no pleasant destinations on their own, and it's unlikely for them to sustain relationships with people where they can perform their labour, avoid emotional honesty, and still function. If things get too "chummy", they're very likely to self-sabotage in dramatic ways, surgically trying to piss as many people off as possible, saying things that can't be taken back and breaking things that can't be repaired. There's pride in there, sure, but they're not hurting people because they're "no good": they're hurting people because they're

terrified to be loved, and because their moral framework has no way to process them getting a hug. Of course there's alternatives to this road, but it's darkly seductive to burn bridges and solemnly move on to the next disaster.

You can point to this. Can point to Rocket Raccoon. Can point to Dave Strider. Fact is, Derse Knights are bleeding little jack-in-the-boxes of disaster until they finally want to be anything else. I don't know precisely what they want to hear, but it's probably best they think of something themselves - they have enough orders. And I do get it.

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March, march, march - through mud and rain, hell and high water, never slow never stop never scatter. Smile, sneer, scoff, anything but scared; paint on a face that fools no one, say it's a statement and fool yourself. Knight in shineless armor, slayer of dragons and demons - or tool of the state, gutter of peasants, survivors destitute in the sum of land disputes. Not your flag, not your cause, but still your fight - and a hundred fights to come, 'till the armor rusts shut. Wouldn't that be a mercy, put out of your misery, relegated to maybes, not the sight you're meant to see. See it through soldier, strike fear from your silhouette...but shadows and shields and suits still aren't enough steel to steel yourself. It won't be rust that kills you - not battle or burden to break you - because there's nothing left to die. It's not chainmail, it's a coffin; it's not heroics, it's a headstone. Take the name of the horse on the board, and take the L with it - sick joke to snicker at, suffer another at your expense. March and move on to the misery that misses you - and miss you're carrying it with you. Rust reflects ruin, steel blocks the light, Servant to the world too scared to live in it. Building, breaking, and building again - sucker forgot that a spiral is a circle. Orders obfuscate the Ouroboros, but any greater good shouldn't single out a sacrifice, and friends worth fighting for aren't asking for a footstool. It bridges are burnt, wood wasn't enough; if stone is stuck down, build it back with bricks. Scrub that steel, and you really will shine...but maybe, you already did.

...Oh take a fucking compliment.

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OUTLAWS

(REBELS, DOCTORS, CHEATS)

It takes a magic touch to bend the rules without leaving any mark, but desperation is it's own mistress. Twist a few rules, ignore the rest, but only enough for you and yours; to **steal** admits trespass, but who's to say the system doesn't have it coming? That principle can wait when people starve? That reform (perhaps not revolution, not yet) may need a touch of violence? Despite the names, "Greed" isn't really the driving force - it's "Envy". The world is simply full of too many nice things being doled out to those that

don't appreciate it, and too many injustices dealt to those that deserved better. Of course that's subjective, but it always will be; for these two, that might be enough.

THIEVES know exactly who they are and who they want to be...or at least, the impression of both of those things, which may not hold up to either scrutiny or setbacks. Sly and snarky, they're difficult to ignore by design; always fighting the tide, defining themselves by their deviations, their unique (or simply unappreciated) talents, and general disagreements. While bold as individuals, they are not truly independent: counterculture requires culture, and rebels require a status quo. Thieves are highly aware of their environment, expectations, and social dynamics, and may only find their voice when they find their audience. Crude and rude boasts of superiority are a cliché, but while the *schadenfreude* of offending has its delights, Thieves are always looking to *impress* far more (even if they haven't realized it yet). No matter how much they stress to be an outsider, they keep "coincidentally" crossing paths, inviting friends to nights of troublemaking and debauchery, or swearing some pretty serious pacts of blood-bonds. They're the team's fixer, the dark horse, the secret weapon...and yes, they really just want you to pay attention to them and never leave, even if they struggle to do it in a way that isn't at least a little rude. Honestly, they're just cats.

To their credit, Thieves are fairly positive people, with a confidence they keep up so often that they're liable to forget when it was or wasn't bluster. They upset the delicate balance of Witches by identifying *as* someone who upsets delicate balances; just as much the free spirit with none of the discretion, a Thief **steals** their Aspect in broad daylight. They're shrewd in justifying loopholes, exceptions, special treatment, and often attaching their signature (and self-worth) to the socially risqué...or, straight up something they don't deserve, belongs to someone else, and they've misunderstood the subtleties of. Losing a Witch's modesty also highlights the mechanism: keep your hands busy, keep your eyes on the prize, do not slow down. Witches always bounce back, but Thieves are playing with higher stakes: lows that bleed the spirit, and highs they'll fight to preserve. Granted, whether this behavior manifests as direct ambition, or construing mischief itself as a performance-art, can go either way; even committing a crime as low as jaywalking is optional, readily substituted by just being *really clear* that they're the kind of guy who would. A Thief's Aspect is not their pride, but what holds it together; their art that the world isn't ready for, their secret technique (weirdly proud of cheating), their illicit romances, their spirit animal, their gold medal in a competition that's killing them (still weirdly proud of cheating), their insistent catchphrases, the niche they won't share, what they won't apologize for, and the molotov that keeps them warm in a cold, cold world.

NICHE. I'm gonna' say it again - **NICHE**. Vriska's reign of terror has become too embellished, and dilluted what genuine comparisons you can draw from her. Real Thieves (we can count Pre-Retcon Vriska) might get ahead of themselves and do damage, but there's limits, and being in the spotlight too long hurts their eyes even if they wanted to be there in the first place. That sense of unworthiness always kicks in and balances them out (eventually), and it's FUCKING WEIRD if you write a Thief without one - daddy issues, not a fucking god complex!

Let's not beat around the bush: Thieves are jerks. Sure, they might openly know this and embrace it, but they're guilty of far more than the occasional faux-pas. Impatience and sadism makes them consistently rude to strangers, and marginally better to friends until they feel slighted. They develop grudges easily, only needing half a reason to swing, and rarely thinking through potential fallout. Witches have their speeches ready for the fated moment they get blamed for everything (rightfully or otherwise), but Thieves walk an unsustainable road treating it as a default; chronic obstinance can only be downplayed, excused, or "paid for" so many times, and Thieves tend to conclude these judgements without giving anyone else (i.e. the offended party) a say. What can make this turn ugly so often is that Thieves are unlikely to see themselves as the aggressor; concerned friends and "society" blur together, to someone who always felt backed into a corner, denied a fair start. This persecution complex is entangled with their defining compulsion to graft established abstractions to their own persona. The ideas of others simply feel more stable, more *complete*, compared to what bubbles from their psyche alone: an outsider, confined to the fringes, unfinished and unappreciated. The root of all Thieves, sadist or sanguine, is their pain: the mythologized and visceral tale of boots on their neck and dreams torn away from them. There is always something righteous in those "origin stories", but Thieves can skip any lessons on empathizing and build a whole life around revenge, abusively passing on their trauma to others until everyone loses.

Vriska did alot of wrong things. She didn't have to, and using predestination as an excuse is more proof she's a jerk. I'm somewhat miffed Homestuck's self-declared "most important character" is so often forgiven of being a murdering bootlicker because "she had a rough childhood", and "she did so much good too!". I can't keep track of when or if Hussie changed their mind about her, and I don't care - in real life, people like that rarely get the boon of *saving the world* to offset their relentless bullshit, and I still got arguments for Spider8itch anyways! I advocate humility here, not just being a "benevolent" asshole.

Prospit Thieves are likely to say that being an asshole is mostly okay so long as you have your reasons - and while they have plenty, they're often not very convincing. Sure, they have a clear sense of right and wrong, but will either have excuses for not doing the right thing, or have some messed up methods to reach it. Their sense of being "cheated" by the world often goes unchecked; they are *always* the underdog, even if they've been on top for awhile. This lack of critical assessment leaves them chasing goals that distract more than repair, undertaking challenges often precisely because they're unqualified. While wounds are an open book to anyone who asks (but not up for criticism (or therapy)), it really doesn't seem to slow them down at all; trauma is reliable justification, like some kind of case-closed,

“why are we still talking about this?” cause-and-effect. They’re also frustratingly off the mark in confronting societal injustice; it’s not that society must be uprooted for it’s failures, but more that the system made a “mistake” in failing to accommodate their specific needs - they either want to be on top, or to get out. It’s harder for them to reconcile the disparity between their callousness and dependencies, making them more prone to write off transgressions, swept under the rug - or cut their losses altogether. If this all sounds like mental framing and not flavour, it’s because Prospit Thieves actually vary quite a bit in that regard: cheerfully obnoxious to ruthlessly competitive, spitfire hero to spiteful loner, high-class vanity to rugged punk. Much like Prospit Witches before them, Prospit Thieves distance themselves from what their mask is hiding, but the higher stakes mean disillusionment borders on mental breakdowns. Life just isn’t as simple as they want it to be, but stubbornly living as though it is only shoots them in the foot.

Sometimes it’s hard writing nice things about Thieves because I keep thinking about Vriska, but there’s alot of “scoundrels with hearts of gold” both in fiction and in reality (I’ve known a few, but never that close). Understanding why they think what they do is important to challenge them - not that different from Witches, fittingly.

I have a few fictional suggestions, but it’s hard to feel like any particular one is a bullseye; honest to god, I keep thinking about Remy from Ratatouille. Still, I knew a bonafide Prospit Thief of Rage for a minute. We both played the same roleplaying MMO, and he liked playing this horny loudmouth who laughs at his own jokes. I knew the guy personally - the character wasn’t far from the man himself, no sir. Such a patronizing attitude while he laughs off all the things that don’t convince him, while stroking his ego about how deadly his wit and insults are. I wasn’t impressed. Then again, I held a grudge long enough to write about it here...but, data is data, ain’t it?

Derse Thieves are likely to say that being an asshole is completely okay if you have comedic timing - and while they have plenty, they also know better. Creatures of habit, they’re unashamed of their worst qualities, insufferably proud of their best, and crystal clear in exactly half of what they want; the remaining half is far too embarrassing, even if it doesn’t really make that much sense why they think that. The good side of this self-awareness is that they have a much better sense how their pain affects them, how far is too far, and their capacity for harm...and the bad side is that their pain is harder to ignore, they’re prone to cross lines cause they *can*, and they may find validation in open cruelty by embellishing their nature from “misanthropic” to “nefarious”. While this does make them much more dangerous friends, it also softens them in a peculiar way: if they’re gonna’ be evil, someone else oughta’ be good. It’s easier for them to stay on the fringes of groups and not over-involve themselves, easier for them to process differences of opinion, and it’s easier to see when their bad habits aren’t even making *themselves* feel better. If they trust someone enough to open up, there is raw sincerity in taking every word to heart, even if it’s harder still for them to truly change. They might be an asshole, but they’ll happily be *your* asshole.

More or less, anyways. Chloe from Life is Strange still rubs me wrong. Those fine lines between ribbing and abuse.

You know, when I found a Vriska fan who claimed to be a Thief of Light on the Homestuck community Discord, I was skeptical, but the fucker really did line up top to bottom - if, yes, Derse and not Prospit. Definitely a chatterbox, but thankfully not so thin-skinned you couldn't point it out. We had a lot of good times and talks, but, they are more busy with work these days - or, maybe, other friends. Won't say it doesn't sting, but one of the benefits of systems like these is coming to peace with people being who they are, and not needing to change them. Thieves be Thieves, and I'm always here if they want to swing around and shoot the shit.

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Hear the screams and shouting, ring the bells and loose the hounds. Face on the posters, lost in the crowd, whisper on the wind says "catch me if you can". Spit the name Thief, who delights in that spite, always one step ahead until they're not. So proud to be a public enemy, you'd forget we're all heroes of our story; victim of circumstance, too proud to cry, too stubborn to beg, when coffers ran dry. Before anything baroque, only bread; before anything brazen, something broken. Apologies attempted met catastrophe, so much for amicability, see it atrophy into apathy, no need to waste pity and cry "sad to see". Justifications are for the men who can afford it, cheaper and quicker to pilfer and floor it. In the absence, an abscess, romanticizing all the thrill of avarice; scorpion or viper, pick the fable that gives the bigger papercut. Revel in infamy till the revelation hits: you didn't walk back on the cycle of violence, just ran it in reverse. Parasite poisoned from the blood, punching past the point of aiming up, pain worse if you believe power was the point; scepters and crowns are only sticks and stones, and they won't feed your stomach or your soul. The real criminals are still tyrants, indifferent to the farmers that are nursed into vipers. Hands cut and called snakes - but conspire, and let's see them fight a hydra. Every trick of the trade needs someone to teach it, and everything worth stealing deserves someone to share with. If justice is twisted, it takes a crook to fix it, 'cause if we weren't owed at least a fistful then why have hands at all?

Get even.

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ROGUES don't say much - either of substance, or at all. They're pretty easy to talk over, and may even encourage you to do so. This isn't to say they're doormats - most are actually quite cheery - but making sure everyone's spirits are up isn't helped by talking about their own problems, don'tcha know. They enjoy distractions, are pleasantly social in sharing those distractions with people they like, and are not *outwardly* rude towards those they don't; they are prone to believe conflict will rarely produce anything constructive. They're awkward, but they aren't looking for people to take care of them; more realistically, they're hoping to take care of others, even if they're not entirely sure how to ask or when it would be appropriate.

These assumptions and apprehension often leaves them isolated, close only to a few, and not prone to matters of substance. Stick around regardless, and they often default to loose advice: openly unsubstantiated, easily dismissed, bordering on platitudes. Past all this bashful indecision, Rogues are capable of some ferocious optimism, finding solutions for entrenched problems and giving a platform to all unheard voices and desires. It's not too hard to see this ironclad resolve brewing beneath the surface...unless, of course, you are the Rogue in question, weighed against everything they can't account for, and everytime it didn't work in the past. The moments extreme enough to make it all manifest run the risk of scaring them away altogether, but even playing it safe is pointless: they're guaranteed to abandon cherished friendships *anyways* for *months or years*, wrought from the consequences of not acknowledging anything bothering them, even privately. It's easy to decide it's better off that way...but is that sympathy of the penitent, or the fatigued resignation of someone too polite to admit they *prefer* to be alone? It's hard enough to convince people they deserve happiness, and it's harder still to follow your own advice.

"The best Homestuck character is Roxy, or you're wrong"

An Heir can reform laws all they want, but Rogues can't wait for the law to catch up (if ever) when there's good deeds that need doing; they **steal** their Aspect on behalf of others, offering more daring solutions, more direct advice, and poaching/reclaiming what would've otherwise been wrapped up in tradition, beaurocracy, guilt, anxiety, etc. What matters is people (certainly their favourites) being happy, and Rogues excel at subverting and loosening the grip of ideological chains. Course, while they're just about as steadfast as Heirs, they're not nearly as stable; too often they hesitate, hold their tongues, avoid making promises, and are unlikely to invoke a miracle on command or in public. They're as prone to rise to challenges and be there when people need them, but they keep at a reasonable distance if someone else has things covered. Even if they try to reach out and play therapist (or whatever else seems required), they're prone to flounder when overwhelmed by too many demands or for too long. Rogues require autonomy to do their best work, and being in the sidelines minimizes how many people and rules they have to argue with at one time; it's a big accomplishment to be someone they speak freely with, without the kid gloves. A Rogue's Aspect is not to be underestimated: it's forgiveness to mistakes past and current, overdue happiness, stolen medicine, the simple pleasures that are easy to miss, a secret garden, technically-not-lying diplomacy, a peace worth fighting for, an injustice to correct, and a piece of their soul crafted to fill a spot in yours.

Unsurprisingly, Rogues also seem to come from households like Heirs, where something was definitely missing (or hugely mishandled) and hurting everyone.

Unlike Heirs, they couldn't do anything about it.

Despite their worries, Rogues aren't really dangerous in a lot of traditional ways; riches and fame rarely hold any allure when there's always someone (either personally or nebulously) who deserves it more. Rather, the pervasive problems stem *from* the compassion; the guilt of saying nothing, the strain of making exceptions for every bleeding heart, and the further guilt of someone so capable of exceptions they're not sure they believe in anything at all. Rogues are much more Robin Hood than their Paired Class, but good intentions don't change that the verb is **steal**; there is an inherent manipulation in twisting someone else's headspace, both harder to ignore and justify compared to Heirs. "Comfort" is the objective, but Rogues struggle determining who should know what or believe what, deifying an "ideal self" of their friends that can only exist through their intervention to engineer it, or their vigilance in protecting it from outside influence. Like with all Classes, it's easy to see how these assumptions of others reflect their language to interact with the world...but aiming any of that kindness inwards, for as comically obvious as that seems to be the right thing to do, is very difficult for Rogues. Their atrocious self-image calcifies, made worse from isolation and rarely trusting appeals; numbness in recognizing their own "hugs and excuses" approach, or resistance to anyone else's grubby hands trying to mold them. Whether as oddballs or outcasts, Rogues frequently invoke their Aspect to weaken faith in their own words, further isolate from others, break important commitments, and blot out the hostilities and complexities of the real world...which is tragic, from someone with a gift in meeting those dangers head on.

The straight up hibernations Rogues make is inevitable - no fixing it, no exception. You love them, they love you, romantically or platonically, they will **STILL** disappear, and the most you can hope for is that they tell you they're taking a break, and don't know for how long. Even then, most will just...drift away, lacking the words to warn you, let alone explain anything when - or if - they come back.

And more permanent ends? Proper friendship enders? Harder to see those coming. You can lose a Rogue before they actually leave. Almost never a shouting-match blowup, but, if you take them for granted for too long, if you offer too little back, their heart stops being in it even if their hands are still helping. They're not used to voicing their own thoughts, obviously, but they don't have to; they'll just stop showing up someday. If they do talk to someone about it, it's clear they already made their mind up.

Prosperit Rogues don't want you to worry about them, and all the reasons you might want to are not so much hidden as "thoroughly de-prioritized" - it's not a big deal, it's handled, they've always managed, why would anything change now? They often hold a cheery exterior, chilled out and casual, but not without unease; an ambient lack of faith in their capability and sincerity, middling between defiant and defeatist with a little laugh at their own indecision. They carry themselves with a casual boldness, but often this is while safe and secure in their established boundaries; they don't really stutter in their advice, but rather, rarely commit to pressure or severity. If that severity is brought upon them, they'll do their best to make it more manageable, but really they're more likely to find great solutions only because they weren't directly asked to give one. This isn't to say

Prospit Rogues are entirely absent minded bystanders: they're just looking for the right *moment* to demand better for their friends and call out injustice, even if they haven't consciously recognized this proverbial coiled spring. Sure, they'll follow people who ask for help (within reason), but it's really *vibing* with do-or-die moments that kick them into high-gear that give them form as a motherfucking *rebel*. Just as well, they can be pretty blunt when someone's exceeded their patience and crossed a line - not cruel, really, just firm. Prospit Rogues might never crack, but they're more than (perhaps even not) easy-going. If they don't know what they'll stand against, they're never going to figure out what they stand for - even if it's staring them in the face.

I've messed this one up more than I'd like. Lots of Prospit Classes, with the right amount of polite awkwardness, can slip into the qualities I use to distinguish these Rogues, and I'm trying to improve in that area. If there's any true north to all this...well, I can never convince myself for sure on pop culture. But I know a handful personally, and one's probably the sweetest person I've ever met. Still, the right circumstances will give you a Rogue who never had time to play worrywart, and Prospit honesty brings out that "rugged survivalist" clearer than most. It's harder to account for that in my writing, but at the end of the day, you don't meet Rogues like that playing video games or volunteering.

You know Rufioh (Homestuck Rufioh, not...not Hook-Rufioh, obviously) is probably not a good role model for cheating on his girlfriend, but he's still so damn charming you almost forget. I'd peg Skylla from Friendsim as one, with the benefit of hindsight.

Derse Rogues are insistant in convincing everyone they aren't worth worrying over, to the point you might not realize they had problems at all. Compared to Prospits, Derse Rogues wear a more saturated mask of cheerful eccentricity, playing themselves up with antics that will stop on a dime if they think they went too far or drowned out someone else's voice. Noticably, they lack the Derse Heir staple of sporadic yet intense violence on their fellow man (I cannot stress this enough: PROBABLY had it coming). They definitely think about it, either as a joke suggestion or personal grumbling, but (almost) always their resentments are vented at a safe distance or in a safe environment. Derse Rogues are predictibly more self-aware than their Prospit counterparts, weighed down by much more verbose self-loathing; all the reasons you shouldn't trust them, all the ways they've let others down, all insisted upon from someone who can't look away from their own reflection. They're far more meticulous and calculated if they *do* help, but too effective at convincing themselves that they shouldn't - that they don't have the right, or it wouldn't amount to anything. Any number of numbed resentments and resignations lie behind walls of goofy deflection, often with the guilt that these feelings exist at all. Even with all these caveats, Derse Rogues can find themselves making excuses for people they shouldn't, struggling to set boundries with individuals who might be less victim and more perpetrator - even to the Rogue in question. Hiding all these blemishes is intended to spare others pain...but maybe, it's also to avoid arguments, from someone who wouldn't know what to do if there *wasn't* a good explanation for all this self-sabotage. While it's all more neurotic than Prospits, Derse Rogues just plain want to help people; the

true difference is that it's more likely to involve slapping them in the face first.

Nepeta deserved better. I'll fucking cut anyone who says otherwise.

I had a handful of Derse Rogues close. I spoke to them candidly, and came to understand what was going to happen - but, never quite came to terms with it. A rational discussion and a friendly hand before any hibernations, I tried to outsmart my problems. Like an idiot.

One left for petty reasons, and I've little sympathy. Another...I shouldn't have asked her to promise me she'd stay close, and she shouldn't have agreed to. A year of silence through the worst time of my life, I thought she was dead - then I was mad she wasn't. Mad she couldn't muster the strength to type a single word through it. Mad enough I felt I had to push her away myself. The last one, the oldest friend I had, I chose my words better; what I wished I'd said before. No promises, no scorn, but still vulnerable in the pain of missing her. She came out of hiding long enough to say what she needed to say, and I've grown to accept that as enough.

Learn from my mistakes. Please.

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Flicker in the light frets to disturb the candle, filch on the loose but only to borrow back. Vigilante to a hundred vengeancees but last of all their own, masked to be modest as much as anonymous - Rogue by trade, nobody by name. Privy to the prayers of peasants pillaged by the privileged; sure they'd prefer a paragon, but the punk bothered to show up, so pardon the comparison. Sickness and starvation is sanctioned by the state, nobility sheltered behind freshly stained red tape; better men squared up and got struck down, so muster half their courage and it'll be enough to skulk. Pragmatist spinning plates, but can't always keep food on them; play pretend it's a feast, and pretend a little harder they'll make it through the night. Redistribute sins of industry, what silk and satin might better be, gifting sweaters made of luxury - toughest fetters made of sympathy. Your people in the gutters but you on the rooftops, close enough to hear their cries, but you still slept through some. So much desperation, and you swore intervention, didn't admit only at your discretion, can't live with the resignations. Someone always starves or freezes, withered and bitter at the liar who promised better; if you suffer for all their sakes, you'll be your own sucker. Nobody with nothing left to give and even less to say, as kindness borrowed defaults. Stand trial, Rogue: was your crime loving too much, or too little? Victim of society's greed, or the source of it? A little company, or only for a little time? Run away to fresh fields and new faces who don't know to ask, and your conscience will only catch up faster. Who are you under the mask - and why don't *you* know?

Everything borrowed will return eventually - one way or another.

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TIER 2 RIVALS: SERVANTS AND OUTLAWS

(A TOUCH OF SEXUAL TENSION)

While all Classes have their compulsions, Tier 2 might be the most identifiable in treating it as a 'job'; a task to fulfill, a virtue to perform, but not emblematic of all they are underneath. Clock-in, clock-out, and try not to lose track of what is or isn't a mask.

It might be embarrassing for Thieves to be grouped with Pages in any regard - fittingly, given all the embarrassments that they, too, try to build over. Both Classes are defined by ambitious self-realization, while leaning on (or imitating) idols that reflect their imagined end-states. Years of their life - or the whole thing - spent on a long journey to close the gap between all their shortcomings and everything they feel a right to. Of course, that "right" is the split polarity of a servant's expectations, and an outlaw's indignations. They know themselves in all the pitiful shames of what they are underneath the bluster; Pages loudly, Thieves in more carefully decided confessions, but both *chronically*. Trying to make themselves cool and confident is always intentional theatre, at its most unstable when they double down and make promises they can't keep; the everpresent risk that invalidation will send them right back down to zero. There is real pride in any peacocking preening, no matter how they might rationalize the good it does - which, could be entirely real. Pleasure and petty competitions are sanctified, justified, but there's something to be said about leading by example and sharing the spoils. Pages and Thieves both have instincts to put themselves first, but the former's admonishment and the latter's enthusiasm equally muddle the big picture. Reigning at the top is fun for a moment, but remembering the shmuck you were provides the empathy to give some *new* shmuck a turn, and pass down everything you figured out the hard way - **inventive** in what they make of themselves, as much as pay forward. Between both Classes is about the same proportionate level of ego, humility, kindness, cruelty, and just as much instability in trying to find a balance. All that's different is what's on display, making one a tsundere and the other a fucking dweeb.

If you ever wonder how much my description of Pages is based on observation, and how much is personal confession...keep wondering.

Knights and Rogues can be some of the best friends you could ever ask for, but better when they know their limits; better when they know how long they can stay **loyal**. If they have their way, all you'll notice is a smile, a pat on the back, and enthusiasm to tag along to any adventures suggested to them. Of course, this is bluster; of course, there are breaking points. Knights and Rogues are on the same trajectory of making sure no one worries about them by engaging in habits that make people worry about them. Even the most withdrawn Rogues have priorities in avoiding pity and concern - proportionate, surely, to the most outwardly obnoxious Knights, playing up a house-of-cards-ego meant first and foremost to push people away. Rogues *can* come close in mimicking these theatrics (mostly Derse ones), but still aren't as inclined towards entertaining schadenfraude in

either direction; the world is cruel enough. Of course, this is still a duty, equal to the more rigidly principled Knights. Compassion and resolve are real in the moment, but still doomed to fall through when it's a "job", overrun by everything that isn't palatable to that self identity. The Tier 1 Rivals of Seers and Heirs had their own "retirements" from the people-pleasing role, but it's something that sneaks up on them, after being so convinced they could do it all forever. Tier 2 Passives know precisely what they're stuffing down, and the only foolishness is thinking they can endure it, or it'll go away on its own. Thus, inevitably, the sharp snaps of disassociation from the routines of friendship and comradeship. The one who lifts you up, endures at your side, laughs at your jokes and gets a laugh out of you too; someone who should exist, in a just world, by servant's design or outlaw's protest. It was never who they really are...but, who else could pull it off?

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FAE

(ZEALOTS, INNOVATORS, AUTOMATONS)

Playing by the rules has limits - not as much as just "knowing" the damn thing, but *still*. Trying to colour inside the lines of your own imagination can sound silly, when more faith inspires more dedication to push through problems that previously seemed insurmountable; to **create** beliefs where there was no precedent (or permission), heart pumping red hot with blood wrought from a stone. While this improvisation might suggest autonomy, it isn't (except it is): Fae are bound tighter to their Aspect, which has always been less "Infallible divine platonic ideal" and more "memetic paintjob over hunches and superstition". They're problem solvers, but beating what *seemed* impossible sorta proves it wasn't in the first place, don't it? With nothing static to **guard**, and **knowing** an even more distant background process, things become unstable. Without caring for consistency and efficiency, or even knowing what they're *talking* about, the Fae charge forward with a reckless charisma. "More" doesn't always mean "better"...at least, not as it pertains to mere *human* sensibilities,

According to the official word, Maids are Passive and Sylphs are Active, and neither are even Paired with each other. This...does not make a lick of sense to me; it does not align to any of either I've met, and I'd even claim not to the characters as displayed in Homestuck proper. Even before any talk of Inversion, you can take the descriptions below as a counter-argument.

MAIDS are identifiable first from their work ethic: a ruthless conviction towards professional productivity in their career, regardless of how dignified (or well-paying) it is. They reflexively act towards what is set before them - by familial burden, by societal expectations, or maybe a particularly inept-looking friend - and default to a confidence that there is nothing that cannot be overcome by gumption and overtime. This makes them liable to treat their future as fixed, in both direction and odds of

success, ticking boxes on a life calendar (that may literally exist on their person). As admirable as any of this is, it's more chronic than choice, and it all makes them peculiar to know personally. Pry past the track record and it's all odd hunches, poorly-timed distractibility, laughing at jokes that no one else is laughing at, and not-exactly-ideal conflict resolution. Maids are ultimately rather self-absorbed creatures, assured they know precisely how the universe works, and that they can play chief engineer to anything in front of their faces - or at least, that there is never any lasting harm in "winging it". While they aren't prone to flaunt laurels or preen for approval, there's issues by running too far in the other direction: that amidst an understanding it would be unfair to expect anyone to do as they do, they also think no one else *could*. There is a casual cruelty in their low expectations of others, to the point of being confused why anyone would get worked up over what they blurt out. Maids always have a plan; if they don't, they make one; if you give them one, they fix it; if you fight them, they do what they wanted to do anyways...and if it all goes tits up, they really don't seem to know *why*.

If you're thinking about career women in movies who end the film giving up on that promotion so they can spend more time with their kids or go on a vacation, you can skip this entry entirely because you already understand who I'm talking about.

You know, maybe I'm just supremely unlucky, but I've befriended *zero* Maids in my years gaming on the internet. I only really got to play anything with a pal I met in high school, and that was when I could convince her to; she was always busy with something more explicitly constructive. Still, I've met lots in my time volunteering, and even got a guess for the lady in charge of Railtown's best cafe. While Maids are in no shortage of inglamorous personality traits (rude, thoughtless, impulsive, arrogant), I've never met one who isn't tough. You meet the good ones where good work needs doing - hence the name, I suppose, even if I do have my reservations on how submissive it sounds.

While certain peculiarities of their persona may ring closer to Mages than Pages, one doesn't even need to consider "fulfilled" Pages to see the gradient. These three Classes are defined by personal principles that steady an individual past fear and confusion; all the momentum of Maids is as much aspiration as desperation, trying to stay one step ahead of their own. And yet, rather than being even-more-paralyzed, impulsivity (and a sprinkle of arrogance) allows them to live by the idealized image of who they're "supposed" to be more often than not...and see the world too, for what it's "supposed" to be. Maids **create** their Aspect, through insistence or innovation against a world that never got the memo. This can be in lock-step to existing traditions/power structures, or trailblazing their own path through life, with a tendency to confuse the two. Of course, as mentioned before, Maids aren't naturally inclined to teamwork, but maybe it's more clear how much that's just from other perspectives muddling their own; that it wasn't dick-measuring (probably), but the sanctity of their funky flow. Likewise, while they don't struggle as much as Pages, it hampers their ability to talk to those who *are* struggling. Maids are fully capable of heart to hearts, but it's not their first foot forward, and they're more likely to get impatient; lured back to a love language of charity labour like a cat

dropping something dead at your feet. A Maid is the living embodiment of their Aspect: it's their blood, their flesh, their doctrine, their only acceptable results, their true north, their reserves of gumption, their most harmful compulsions, their wildest stabs in the dark, the follow-up stab to make sure even after you screamed "don't stab me", and the fantasies they breathe as facts that either are or *goddamn should be*.

This is a wild concept, but if you put unimaginable amounts of pressure on a child and only validate them when they "succeed", you're likely to get a Maid...or, you know, a Page, and there does seem to be that AFAB/AMAB split. It's pretty depressing; living as yourself, for someone else. It's hard to take the reigns back of your life, even when all you do is pull the cart. The thing is, if you don't also realize how heavy it is, you're less likely to protest...

Zeal is a powerful motivator and an enticing high, but anything's dangerous in excess. One of the more explicit concerns is the pressure Maids take on, overworking themselves with an obstinance in even acknowledging the pain of their endurance...but, that is the most *charitable* blemish. Yes, Maids move mountains, but often without asking themselves if the mountain was where it was for a reason. Without Pagey-er hesitations, Maids not only fail to notice when their instincts have pushed them to a bad idea, but they may not actually care; too easily, they loop back to Mage arrogance with three times the twitchy fingers. In a personal bubble of would-be insights and rationalization, they can turn conspiratorial on weak threads, or indignantly fan the fires of what *maybe isn't such a big deal*. This is to say nothing of being able to justify intricate plans of revenge and humiliation, as all the personal bias in "what's gotta be done" only gets worse under pressure. More like Mages (and admittedly, less like Pages), an uppity attitude is still not likely to be attached to traditional boasts and attention seeking...but Maids *are* more likely to take on roles of hierarchy, and see forceful measures as a potential necessity of the duty. Whether this is "Corporate management" or "Older sibling" is besides the point; it all stokes the same fire of ruthless gumption, convinced anyone not currently agreeing with you either needs to get with the program or get the fuck out of the way. These group schisms put a spotlight on Maids biggest blemish: they're not fair. Motivated, sure, but all the work ethic in the world won't mean anything gets finished, or to anyone else's benefit, or even done *well*. Maids will work themselves to death, for reasons they forgot or hallucinated in the first place, and still leave you out to dry just because they got *bored*.

"Had to be me; someone else might've gotten it wrong." It's a good line for Mages, Pages, Maids, and the last rung on the ladder we'll get to. I think Maids truly do encapsulate the purity of that belief more than anyone else, but that doesn't mean it's right; they highlight the strengths and limitations both, and are so stable they live with it.

Prosperit Maids might throw you for a second. They move with the current more often than against it, valuing both the substance and the image of an ideal friend, family member, worker, and citizen. While they don't take on any of the uniquely distinctive traits of other Classes, "Cheerful and peppy" doesn't immediately suggest all the fun...*quirks*, we've discussed. Still, if

you're keen enough to recognize what you're looking at, then take the rest as a guarantee: a suspicious lack of vacation days, a naively-overcertain prediction to the trajectory of their entire life, and a fiery jump to conclusions when something sets them off. They excel when the going's good, but their moxie in pushing through trouble and setbacks is built on an expectation that victory is inevitable; they might get thrown off balance, but they never expect to *fall*. Disillusionment with Prospit Maids is often as much with society as their self image, heartbroken at ideals that don't make the changes advertised, imposed by institutions who may not have had the best of intentions in the first place. If these setbacks don't divert their course forward, then any hypocrisies or abuses of power go unchecked...but the alternative is uncomfortable. It means humouring all the ugly guilt the day after burning a bridge, and not treating years wasted as a sunk-cost fallacy. In the choice between bleeding or weeping, too many pick the former.

Addressing Jane Crocker and her fascist empire in *Homestuck*² is...maybe not a *pointless* venture, but I'm less inclined compared to the dork teenager from the comic proper, removed from the baggage of that potential future. Amy Santiago of *Brooklyn 99* and Princess Caroline of *Bojack Horseman* are a more reasonable display of characteristics, fit to those I've met in reality. None close at the moment, but I remember all the spats I had with an aunt of mine...

I never watched *Zootopia*, but from cultural osmosis alone, I'd bet good money that rabbit counts.

Derse Maids are pretty obvious. Any potential confusion like the previous example should only last a minute, before they say something casually psychotic and move on like there was nothing weird about it. Sometimes, they're not trying to attract attention to themselves, and only seem passingly confused that other people aren't on their wavelength. Sometimes, there's a certain oddball mirth, cheerful about what they break as much as **create**; very little of this is played up for amusing theatre, compared to a genuinely unhinged impulsivity. Others still wear the mask of strict and stoic professionalism proud, cutting a path forward in life while resolute that anyone who gets hurt is just the price you pay...but under it, somewhere, are flickers of those human doubts, and probably the clownery too. None of this stops their diligence, which can be transparently recognized as masochistic thrill seeking between more traditional rationalizations; half-aware of their Sisyphean nature, but not dwelling on it long enough to believe the rock won't stay up there if they try *really hard* this time. This also doesn't stop all that volatility to confrontation, extending to entire campaigns of revenge lasting years. It's difficult to tell where the lines are and when they've already been crossed, meaning they'll probably only voice their truest frustrations at you all at once, unexpectedly, possibly minutes after (or even *before*) trying to fix your problem. When they finally burn out, there's a strong pull to keep going anyways, deprived of any justification beyond compulsion - addict to the ambrosia of "doing what needs to be done". Don't let the eccentricities distract from the damage done: to themselves, to others, and to everything that could have been.

One of my best friends in the world. A lot of squabbles and time off, before we'd reconnect and talk things out. Currently quiet now, but I have my hopes on 'someday'. Beyond any points to make on how Maids are totally one step away from Pages...well, I appreciate what we have in common, compared to other friends. Even if she's a lot more successful.

If you're looking to media: don't immediately go to girlboss. Don't *immediately* go to "cold shoulder business lady". Maids *can* be dismissive, but they're downright *wacky* past the pretenses, and I'll have more to say on that later. *Persona 4's* Yukiko and *Persona 5's* Sae are both working the blueprint, and the disparities between "comedic companion" and "imposing antagonist" make a spectrum worth studying. If you need to be reminded they're the same Class, certainly their monstrously-manifested shadow selves are cut from the same cloth.

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Rustles and shadows past the treeline and out of mind, almost; burdened by what goes bump in the night, backed up by grandmother's grim fables. Paranoia cannot parse folklore and fact, but stoke torch-fire to blot out it's better off not knowing. So come, ye curious or ignorant; come cold iron and crosses. Traipse a border brokered on the bodies of those bold enough to trespass, and bear witness: bark and bone, sap and sinew, catalyst cryptid of the cryptic convicted to conviction, contemplating what to do with you. Made more than mortality's thin definition, made servant to ancient court's demonstration, maiden pure only to their delineation. Warrior and worshipper and architect above all; mystic metals, stone, and trees, weaved and wrought into monuments just as strange. Let the Hallow decide what's garrison or garden, or both or neither, with the Maid sanctified and sanctioned in dutiful confusion; always "how?" and never "why?" - but what's stopping you? Parse the inspiration from the inconsistent, that the mythic might've missed it: grim fables of children stolen in the night, heard, told, and lived. The ape redirected against itself, mutated into miracle worker, muddle the lines between factions and infections - and left in it, you. The creator is creation, caught in a loop to forget you're not a cog, but if you're done holding yourself back then ask: what defines "more"? The woods are your playground, but thin definition of home - so make it one, rule the fae, or burn it down and start again or don't. Traipse a border they all said was one-way and introduce yourself to people you don't belong to anymore - but could, if they can keep up. Mix metals into alloys, break bread into alliances, weave meat into hybrids bred past both of your mistakes...or don't, or do, or a little or a lot, or something strange and dangerous and new - and definitively, inalienably, you.

You're a human being with needs, and a force of nature. Own it.

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SYLPHS live for other people - they're unyieldingly optimistic, supportive to a fault, and treat "friendship" as a professional and formal contract. Productive and altruistic in equal measure, Sylphs preach black and white (mostly white) universal morality, always with an explanation or

accommodation for when it contrasts reality. While more than a little snippy to slights, their default worldview is so gosh darned optimistic that they'll have a smile plastered on their face a majority of the time regardless; even an Aspect on the southern end of the compass will do little to dampen the belief that any situation can be improved by elbow-grease. Despite this high energy, most remain on the backline, alternating between proxy enthusiasm or putting the "Passive" back in "passive-aggressive". Don't get me wrong, they're duty bound to provide some insane support that would be unthinkable to outright ask someone, but Sylphs get carried away far too easily; terrible with boundaries, personal space, and anything less than a hard "no" (or sometimes that too). One shouldn't be reckless in encouraging them to get out of the bleachers or to take their wildest ideas at face value; not until they find a way to reconcile an alarming amount of personal uncertainty with who they are, and what will make them happy. Sylphs are the lynchpins in any friend group - or only convinced they are, and dangerous in what they've decided that entails.

"I don't feel like I can be friends with someone without helping them."

Sylphs live for other people - or rather, tend to believe that, despite being a sentient human with wants and needs. The currents of their Aspect are strong enough that there is a temptation to believe it will harmonize the world no matter what...but they're *just barely* not fully convinced it'll happen without them reminding everyone and staying on guard. Sylphs over-involve themselves even more than Knights, but pull the same trick as Page-Maid in being able to **create** ways out of fail-states; fudge the numbers, never say die, and rewrite the rules whenever they get in *anyone's* way. While this adaptability makes them less obviously (or, outwardly) contentious than Knights, they aren't actually Adapting their Aspect; failure is not an option, and if their friends aren't "succeeding" (**A VERY SUBJECTIVE CONCEPT**), then something *must* be wrong with the script. This makes Sylphs hardwired to brainstorm solutions to problems that never looked like they had solutions, but terrible at noticing when only they decided it was a problem. Their Aspect is their service to humanity, their contractual obligations, the life calendar they plan for everyone else, their most passionate lectures, the fun ways they'd "upgrade" their friends, and the ways they nurture others in a way they want to be appreciated...even though they're shy, or defensive towards the idea of (explicit) reciprocation.

My mother is in her 60's, and has been loud (very, very loud) about the wonders therapy has done for her; apparently, up until now, she hasn't realized how traumatic her childhood actually was, despite the facts remaining "constant screaming and beatings". I asked a Sylph I know (a very close friend, mind you) what their childhood was like. They responded, in complete sincerity, with an uneasy "I don't know".

I'm a bit concerned.

Sylphs live for other people - and sometimes, that means pinching someone's cheek and hijacking their life completely. Their dopamine rush is locked behind people saying "This isn't actually a big deal" or "I didn't ask for help", and Sylphs will often *fight you* to get that hit. With more stable smiles and more contentment in their (percieved) marginalized place in the universe, Sylphs lack the reliable explosions Knights exhibit - but when they *do*, they're playing with twice the gunpowder. Every problem a Sylph percieves is their responsibility, and their creative optimism means anyone not accepting their encouragement must just hate being happy. Sylphs grumble more than Knights, but don't "snap" the same way - they don't burn bridges to isolate, they burn bridges to trap you with them. The helper instinct never stops, and the idea there's just the *tiniest* motive of pride, resentment, or helplessness seems difficult for them to notice; depression and desperation are old friends, always something under control, always something they could work around. Remember that this is a brain that's decided it's their job to have all the answers, and failing that job isn't the problem: the problem is that they don't know who they are if they *don't*, especially since acting out like this is usually spurned by sharp setbacks, humiliation, wakeup calls, and other bad news. The world is always so close to perfect in their eyes, but closing that gap is impossible - and not going to fix what's twisted up anyways.

I find it fascinating how utterly indistinguishable Sylphs are from the role of "mother" - culturally, anyways. It's just seen as a sort of default, and it's hard to tell if that's the healthiest position for the genuine articles and those under them. Given I know a male-identifying Sylph (fairy godfather?), it's not just a questionable ideal, but sometimes not even an option. Granted, I've noticed a few in the social worker business...

Prospit Sylphs have the most stability in being a good friend and generous provider. They support everyone, give lots of second chances when they shouldn't, and only ask that everyone is civil. If they do overstep, however, they also have the biggest blindspot: "do right for right's sake", sure, but they can't *stop* doing right. Sometimes they'll toil making gifts or gestures for people who either don't want it (or didn't appreciate it the "correct way"), and sometimes they just can't let go of their particular status quo. They simply don't moderate their expectations, and the world will dissapoint. At worst, they'll frame selfishness as the assumed world order, trying to push people to be only the hyper-exaggerated image in their head, cruel at anything they interpret as "unpleasant", and failing to understand how authoritative they've become - the fact that they're arguing against their friend's actual words doesn't seem to register. Don't let this distract from the fact that they will acomplish alot of good by not giving up on people and trying to help them succeed...they just shouldn't be *complacent* in that, and assume that any good (or harm) they do is cosmically permitted - let alone ordained.

Hi mom.

Derse Sylphs intertwine “I’ll die for my friends :)” and “I’ll cut anyone who fucks with me :)” in the same philosophy, and occasionally in the same sentence. They’re exactly as aggressively helpful as any Sylph, but no stranger to the “aggression” part; if the world needs omelettes, that means no hesitation in breaking eggs. Unfortunately, given that eggs are people, they run into the familiar Derse issue where being aware of your problems is not the same as fixing them. Stern, stressed, and aware of their pride, this breed of Sylph is still capable of presenting as the backline beck-and-call in a way that’s hard to differentiate from Prospits; they’re a touch more openly self-deprecating, and a few notches more fond of sassy zingers. They truly differentiate themselves when they get invested in a project, thriving on forward momentum with a touch of chaos; at home in the eye of the storm, but with an outside impression of “crazy mad scientist”. While twice as venomous in insults, Derse Sylphs are more outwardly uncomfortable with total authority, unlikely to assume and prone to cracking when “left in charge”. The contrasts of helpless sychophant, proxy parasite, over-protective parent, and wild god-complex are plainly visible even to them, and it’s all as terrifying as it is exciting. They’re the most in need of encouragement to get out there and strut their stuff, but it’s still important to make sure they don’t get in too much trouble.

I always felt Pearl from *Steven Universe* was a fair example. She might be infamously “salty”, but her devotion and belief is genuine, as much a boon as it is a bond. Creature of habit, and likely Hopebound. “Sylph of Life” might sound redundant, but the redoubled motivation to longevity and prosperity feels an entirely fair judgement to make of *God of War’s* Freya. If you’re feeling a bit swamped by the symbolic presence of motherhood in those examples, take comfort I know a transmasculine Sylph of Life. He’s cool.

- - -

something something

yeah

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ROYALS

(JUDGES, SKEPTICS, SPOILSPORTS)

You keep pushing and pulling, something just might snap. Even if you want to steal it, you can’t admit it - or won’t notice, in all the upheaval. It all gets caught up in words and misdirection, because these two revel in complications. Their Aspect is brittle, and corrosive to what’s around it; whether they want to or not, they will end up **destroying** it, and destroy far more with what they *don’t*. What values it has must survive doubt and dissection, and anything left (or hidden) will be valued over anything else. We have upped the stakes from rebels resisting society, to society resisting the mystical unknown. Neither was ever going to win, but it is the politics

and power of royalty that drag everyone else into their fight - their burden is to know what's best for you.

Deciding how much praise, dismissal, or warning to attribute to any Class is, in the end, subjective; we are all capable of good and evil, both petty and glorious, however we define any of it. For how I define it though, and in a way I will make my case for...well, I go harsher on this one. They're not write offs, but I'm not here to be delicate.

PRINCES (or princesses) are...*complicated*. Most would likely describe themselves as "shy", or "people-pleasers" on the inside, but that can be a stark contrast to what they actually *do*. Princes take charge readily, confront what they see as injustice, make their moral disagreements well known, and struggle to articulate and live by a perfect philosophy. Even if they're reluctant to reach out, they pride themselves on being there for the people they care about - but "pride" is the operative word. High personal standards and good intentions can blur into dangerous compromises, and a slew of rationalizations to avoid apologies. It is disingenuous to say Princes aren't ones to look out for, despite a capability to be loyal friends and strategists. They frequently reinvent themselves, constructing a persona, reputation, and guidelines that ensure they are both the resident advisor and some definition of "cool". However, doubt and self-loathing will decompose this mask, making them an emotional burden with increasingly erratic and drastic decisions. At the breaking point, another baptism; not so much an apology as a "don't worry", a new "clean slate", and perhaps a new address or social circle...yet, no matter how segmented a Prince's life looks, they really don't change much. They're just defensive dorks who try to pretend they don't care, while rationalizing the bitter isolation their constant complaining earns them as "the price of being smart". Again, Princes are complicated, but the real problem is that they keep trying to make everything around them equally complicated - especially when it isn't.

I might still have a few Princes here. It's unlikely, but, maybe you think "Hey this is starting to sound like me, though it's harsh". You're probably about to be pissed at the stuff I say next though, so, I guess most of this is for other people going "pff, yeah this is totally steve" and I'm sorry Steve but it's a fact of life that Princes hate being called Princes. It sounds like a catch-22, but that's only if you value your opinion more than everyone else you know...which you might try to justify one way or another here. Something to work on, right? Maybe? Come on Steve, work with me.

Princes do not take well to other people trying to "sum them up" - which is a great way to sum them up. While they (usually) avoid the caustic swagger of Thieves, the fundamentals remain: chipped shoulders, self-reliance, eager-to-please yet reluctant-to-trust. The ideals of a Thief become high enough that openly self-serving behavior becomes difficult to justify to themselves as much as others; the whole Aspect feels "off", and trying to find their place within it can take a lifetime. It is not enough to be a fixer or an "in-the-know" showoff, but these higher ambitions and expectations don't lead to motivation as often as they lead to defeatist misanthropy. In the case of the former, a Prince **destroys** *through* their Aspect, as a revolutionary iconoclast boldly proclaiming their ideas "THAT THE *MEDIA* WON'T TELL

YOU ABOUT". In the case of the latter, a Prince **destroys** the Aspect itself, trying to deromanticize its allure and disentangle it from their identity. This obsession with having all the answers of How Things Should Be Done has numerous cracks, most of which stem from still being Thieves^2. Princes are inherently contrarians, thriving on (and/or paranoid of) persecution, with their truest passions (and motive) still buried in the Aspect they keep loudly complaining about. Authority masks awkwardness, but both conceal accountability, strangling a Prince's incentive and ability to self-reflect. A Prince's Aspect is an academia that vexes them, the contraband they relieve you of, an endangered beauty, a fragile peace, an embarrassing hope, the lover that rejected them, a sickness they recklessly amputate, a nightmare no one else shares, and the crown of thorns they don't know themselves without.

Dirk Strider literally "raised himself", which is kind of amusing to imagine for an infant in an isolated apartment. However, it *is* an apt metaphor to how Princes describe their upbringings, which resemble far more the hostility Eridan experienced. Usually. Like a good 80% of the time. If not parents, I do know a Prince (who's always been rather well adjusted) who says he adopted this way of thinking purely through his own autonomy. It's odd to think about, and I know they get all futzy when they get examined, but damn if there's not something TO all this...

The unfortunate truth is, Princes can do an alarming amount of damage to the people around them despite good intentions; an impulse to find problems will, when overextended, create them. They can be too involved in other's affairs while being unsolicited or simply unsuited, and not notice their overprotective nature creating unhealthy power dynamics. Without being able to own up to their spite like Thieves, Princes often belittle and undermine others alongside (or in lieu of) supportive concern, unconsciously(?) gravitating to those that endure it. They are often confrontational and argumentative, protective of their dignity as much *if not more* than their friends - and often, *to* those friends. Provide enough pressure and they often default to a familiar argument of "Everyone is twisting my words, out to get me!". The worse this gets, the more likely Princes will start rejecting their Aspect wholesale as a corrupting influence that only they can see through; conveniently (and hypocritically), the sum of this often results in an interpretation of their values that *only* benefits themselves. Abuse and manipulation at this point is rationalized as an immutable fact of their nature or life; trying to console them rarely reaps results, as does reprimanding them that the damage they've done is still somehow worse than what they're willing to admit. Beyond the speeches, there's just someone who cracked trying to do everything themselves, and felt stupid for trying in the first place. It is difficult to negotiate with someone who may prefer to turn their life into a trainwreck rather than accept a hug...but, one of the most important facets of dealing with Princes is reminding oneself that you never needed their singular approval in the first place.

"And now I feel my calling is to break apart and fall to pieces; better yet, invent a brand new method of ascension."

"So here I am, respectfully and royally destroying any chance of getting back on your good [graces]."

"So what? Did you want me to say sorry?
Should I apologize when you ignore me?
Didn't ask to be right or to be lonely.
Or to be hatched into an ugly story."

- "Ugly Story" by PhemieC, 2013 (i think)

Prospit Princes are peacekeepers, but only to their definition of "peace". They cultivate a reputation for being sturdy, loyal, and trustworthy, while not shy about particular merits they've earned or skills they've practiced. The creation of their philosophy and rules to life is slow, cautious, and deliberate - the execution and extolling however, is casual, even reckless. They're emotionally transparent, and trying to look confident is an act of politeness and not deception. This transparency extends to what they take issue with: Prospit Princes do not hesitate to speak their mind on moral disagreements, (percieved) offences to them or those around them, or just general "bad vibes". They're matter-of-fact in having exhausted their Aspect of all remaining value, but that's often rather little, and pushing them to try again (or doing it better yourself) hits their biggest sore spot. They're frequently blindsided by how intense and overprotective they come off, but mistrust alternatives to their instincts. If people reject their oversight, they're likely to assume that's someone else's fault for "not getting it", and these arguments can make them more hassle than help. There is an implicit (or explicit) expectation of respect for protections past and present, quick to blame others while priding themselves on being the first to forgive. These schisms of perception can be mended, to learn both what their friends want and what *they* want...or, devolve into an echo chamber of bitterness and sacrifice, while the Prospit Prince learns who will or won't prove "unreasonable". The worst of their manipulations and distorted reality are guided by "intuition"; if a Prospit Prince truly has abandoned their principles, they are the last to know, and the very last to admit it.

I had a long, long history with a certain friend. He always called it a "scientist impulse", which was as wrong as when Eridan did it. Everybody's big brother - and he'll snarl at you if you contest it. His behavior is perfectly encapsulated in characters of Homestuck's extended material, to the usual eerie degree these things are...I doubt he'd be happy about that. Doubt he'd accept it. All I can really do is prove his defenses unnecessary, and see where things go from there. At least others can recognize it.

Zebruh, arguably. Jaime Lannister, I got a hunch. Saltzpyre, endearingly. Chuck McGill, 100%.

Derse Princes are the most deliberately obfuscative people you'll ever meet: an eternal engine of disparate reinvention and self-sabotage, masked by any number of excuses besides the somewhat obvious truth - insecurity. They reliably "start" as teenage supervillains with too much to prove (and transparently high opinions of themselves). This evolves into a superposition of shifting masks: eager and loyal friends with surprising honesty about their fears, burdened protectors making the hard decisions, suave yet

casual charmers looking to do good without straining themselves, sarcastic sadists happy to dissappoint others with “how the world really works”, or a martyring “born-broken” monster who ruins everything and everyone around them. While Prospits dip into all these pools, it’s Derse Princes who lose sight of their own truth and extend past their own limits; too cruel to loved ones, they crack into devotion begging requital; too desperate to prove their “magnificent” individuality, they crack into a helpless “victim of circumstance” begging forgiveness. Among all these things, they are *still* their Aspect despite themselves, often preferring to preach “nihilistic freedom” rather than the passions they find too embarrassing to dare admit. Of course, that “freedom” pits them against everything and everyone around them, too obvious in what they’re scared to lose. While many stay on the sidelines (and may prefer it that way), even contextual authority tempts the worst: an aura of smug superiority that never truly hides the desperate hysteria, trying to frantically overwhelm competing voices with personal attacks and gross humiliation. It can only fall back as “constructive criticism” so many times, and falling back further to “I’m actually the victim” should **never** forgive abuse. Ultimately, this “tragic and failed protector” is one more mask from someone who doesn’t want to be hurt anymore...but it is the hardest to take off.

I am nothing close to unbiased on this one. I’ve known some eggs.

It’s funny how much the “tortured genius, too smart to be happy” archetype gets passed around. Cause like, they’re almost all Derse Princes, but it’s a very specific instance that doesn’t reflect the whole. You can look at Dr. House and Rick Sanchez and go “Hope and Life”, but they’re still exaggerated in how far they go and how much the world facilitates their paticular egos. It’s Bojack Horseman that stands out to me, because the swath of flashbacks, progression, regression, small moments, big moments, conclusions by himself and by the people around him...that’s like the ENTIRE JOURNEY of a Derse Prince (of Light, specifically). Frankly if you watch the whole show, it’s a better crash course than I could ever do.

That, or the Pesterquest Dirk Strider route. Hearing nervous “definitely a knight of heart shut up” young Dirk interact next to “looks like he would have a mental breakdown if he lost an argument” bad-timeline adult Dirk is a good display of how even Delegated-Homestuck-Vassals account for the spectrum of Prince reinvention - despite it always, eventually, boiling down to the same question:

>Trust your friends

>Trust yourself

- - -

Complicated compromises, juxtaposed fragments; politician and paragon, penultimate in parallel. Heartfelt pleas and heroic battles, transcribed by the masses as lectures and posturing from the would-be, the runner-up, the “almost” all-you-want-to-be. Prisoner to silk and satin, suffering from success, misunderstood misanthrope. No one can see you eye to eye; you watch over the people you love, and they feel looked down upon. You can’t settle, you won’t; you won’t let anyone. Sole skeptic to superstition, you scrutinize and subdue sorcery; smelt it down and sift through the slag to see what survives. Science called sin or just superfluous, the ignorant and

illiterate iterate - it irritates. A Prince owes their people, and all interrogations of the imperial inquisition that make war to folklore are necessary - yet, flirting with demotion, to be disavowed by dissent. Why then? The motive? Protection by the wary? No, more simple; beneath spite and sneer is the spurned and scarred, unable to trust what could not be tamed, seeking some veneer of victory in vindictive violence while welding and wielding weapons of all viscera violated. An usurper, so be it, it's what they always expected - or just you? All that initiative, no imagination; who are you besides your birthright and burden? A Destroyer, only? To your hundred excuses, one retort: "**can't**, or **won't**?" You could be a good man, so long as you stop trying to be the greatest. You could be a heroic savior, if you stopped worrying who will notice. You could be a good King, but only when you stop wanting it, let alone thinking you ever had to be.

Don't break the world; break the cycle.

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BARDS are *also* complicated, but not as much as they might like. They are lackadaisical, prone to offend, and tend to put in twice as much effort to get out of a problem as it would have taken just to solve it. The most iconic breed of Bard styles themselves as a free-spirited philosopher, slipping past rigid preconceptions to engineer (or blindly take credit for) the realizations you never expected to have...but, there's plenty more who don't get that far, and give the game away. Bards are a wellspring of doubt and questioning, but the "Maybe I have a point, maybe I don't" routine is cover to hide how routinely it's the latter. Bards can cultivate the clown persona, decide it's something to grow out of, or completely miss that it was an option. Without it, it's more clear to see Bards as someone who's equally as confused as they are prone to incite confusion, feeling genuinely *helpless* at their inability to stop talking past the point of pissing people off. Bards see themselves as diligent and resourceful, but this can be anything from empty potential, smoke and mirrors around blatant laziness, genuine moxie, or any malleable combination. Even at their best, they're routinely inflexible in redirecting this vigor in ways that would more tangibly help those around them, or even to their own benefit; too often, they will only catch you after they spent 20 minutes deciding you are, indeed, falling. Bards exist on a squiggly spectrum of revolutionary, guru, scoundrel, companion, or a pile of sputtering excuses who can't do basic tasks you told them about weeks ago. It's up to Bards to decide who they are...even if it still usually *looks* like that last one.

If you're thinking of the common "wise stoner" archetype, you're on point - though, as I've been trying to correct my earlier drafts on, there's plenty of exceptions. It is still a *lot* of them though, and that means there aren't a lot of fictional examples in starring roles. Still, you can get the point across fine by pointing to the Dude of "The Big Lebowski" and calling it a day there. Sure there's Jack Sparrow, but that might raise your expectations high enough to be disappointed...

Bards might love their mystique, but they really are just Rogues^2. Disagreeing with the lifestyles of others is done without hesitation, downplaying ones sincerity with levity evolves into outright clownmanship, and difficulty articulating oneself turns into reveling in misdirection. Sure, there's bashfulness and appeals to alternatives, but Bards ramble under pressure instead of retreat, and these insistant pushes on sensitive topics come off as less "heartfelt imploring" and more "arrogant curiosity" (even though there *is* always compassion at its root). The crisis-response impulse is in there, but where a Rogue flirts with drastic solutions, a Bard dances around impossible revolutions; always talking about what they *could* do, but only doing anything after everyone assumed it was all talk. Bards weaken the grip of beliefs in reckless curiosity, trying to free their friends of shackles regardless of whether they can present an alternative or not - or whether those shackles had a point. Bards **destroy** their Aspect, but not directly like Princes: their statements invite others to question it of their own volition, or allow it to die through circumventing (or just ignoring) its conventions. The "grand cause" rarely appears (or is) more than aimless spitballing - but a keen nose will smell gasoline waiting for a match. Whether they prefer their spiritual calling mysterious, or genuinely have no idea what the fuck they're doing, they have no power here; their Aspect is their first and favourite thing to fight you on, an impossible standard, a mishandled injustice, what won't hold them back (or accountable), their biggest blind spot, a topic of fascinating theory and no praxis, a lucky guess, a *wrong* guess they defend anyways, a broken fire alarm, a dead parrot, sporadic invincible compassion, an out of nowhere nuclear solution that changes everyone's lives forever, and, sometimes, very rarely, something they know better than everyone else in the room.

That Bards started asking questions at a young age is no surprise - but finding commonalities for how it made them feel, how commonly it was outright abusive, even sibling dynamics, isn't easy unless I'm willing to hold some of them at gunpoint.

There is a Bard who stood out to me, who got a ramblin' on receiving "Blood" on the Extended Zodiac. Apparently, his family had lots of relatives passing through and supporting each other, but he didn't like that no one explained why he was supposed to care about these strangers. Since no one gave him a good enough answer, he called them by their first names without specifying "uncle" or "aunt" or whatever. He's proud of that disrespect, and remained proud on his own interpretations of family for years to come, but it sure as hell proves my point.

While it *is* impressive when they show flashes of genius, and those righteous calls of a new world order blow Rogues out of the water, those are both in the rare moments when their jumbled jigsaw of a worldview snap into place - and *none* of that guarantees it'll be actually beneficial for anyone. It's appropo to call a Bard a wildcard, but beyond the pizazz, it highlights that they're a human being you can never truly trust. Whatever they might be up to when you're not looking or where you're not concerned, they're still *defaultly* lethargic, undermining anyone who expects more of them and so often failing to get why anyone has a problem with them in the first place. Mistrusting others is reflexive, conjuring second-wind arguments right

when you think something might break through. Unqualified and unsolicited, even the noblest intentions to enlighten suffer from a lack of study, and a lack of manners; laughing off their critics isn't as funny as they might think it is, and appeals for patience have diminishing returns. They can be inspirational gurus, manipulative monsters, emotional anchors, aimless fools, and - intentionally or otherwise - blur those lines as much as possible. Too many are seduced into thinking vague answers, directionless arguments, and wiggling out of problems means "winning". They do *want* to help people, they just don't listen to those same people when they try to chain the Bard down with things like "basic respect" and "boundaries" - *and that's the most frustrating part*. If a Bard has your back, if they get their priorities in order, then they can make all the competing voices of life seem so little and far away. A Bard's impenetrable defense can actually make them a defender, just like Rogues and Heirs before them...but they'll let you bleed out with a smile, if they can't be convinced to care.

Pidgeons and chessboards.

I can't write something a Bard would like reading that isn't wildly inaccurate. Some people have asked me to. I get it. It's definitely possible. Maybe someone else could. But this is what I'm good at, and you KNOW who I'm talking about.

Prospit Bards always believe that they have a point and everybody loves them, while preferring to ignore any potential cracks in this self-image. They are the breed of Bard who strays the least from their best ideals: speaking truth to power, tempering their friends obsessions and certainties, and keeping the mood light while they do it. Of course, making good on these qualities is not as easy as simply *insisting* that's what they're doing, which makes it a coinflip if this is all empty promises and hot air. It is instinctual to doubt others, but the capacity to constructively criticize is crippled by how convenient it is to doubt criticism. The fact is, Prospit Bards are already putting in the amount of work they want in the areas they want, but so few can live with the reputation of "lazy" or "neglectful" that often earns them; laughing it off is an alternative to thinking about it. Again, they *want* to be a supportive friend, but they don't want to dwell on times or ways they haven't, let alone unpack any accusations of "emotionally invalidating"...and in egregious cases, this can make Prospit Bards unconsciously manipulative, exploiting trust and sympathy to secure their easy-living echo chamber. Because of all this, for something to *truly* crack a Prospit Bard's worldview, it will necessarily have to upturn everything else; put them on the back foot, and you've got a stampede of angry confusion, throwing accusations everywhere in the hopes it can say "false alarm, I was right about everything the whole time and don't have to change". There's a lesson here familiar to most Classes, in that they probably need their own medicine - to be challenged, and offered new perspectives. They'll probably tell you they already do that plenty...but if they still sound *smug*, feel free to decide that yourself.

You remember that Bard I mentioned earlier? Community leader. Kept things going for a decade, then...slipped it. I mean there was a combination of factors, and I did play a part, but that's neither here nor there. What matters is, he snapped a few times, and that righteous indignation stuck with me. After a hundred conversations of everything and nothing, of mindless tangents or greivous sin, he had this fire in his eyes - I recoiled. He was Blood-bound, and he certainly earned it. Truth be told, I still respect what he did acomplish, in a way I don't feel anyone else could've.

Another guy who lived at that house was a fucking troglodyte who never paid rent and ate everyone's marked food in the fridge. Boy did he like listening to himself talk.

Derse Bards know they do not always have a point; that they are an individual prone to wild tangents, bullshit theories, and incessant heckling. Alot of variation in Derse Bards, along with their capacity for change, circles one specific variable: do they believe these compulsions *hamper* their redeemable qualities, or simply magnify the schadenfreude when they prove everyone TOTALLY shouldn't have underestimated their genius? Even this is rarely a straight answer, as there are Derse Bards who wobble between the two, and Derse Bards who double down on pride that poisons any point they could have had. Be it altruism, malice, egomania, or self loathing, it all lies behind a shit-eating grin, pushing every joke too far while mocking everything held with sincerity or sanctity. This behavior is all-but-guaranteed to wind up with their closest friends yelling at them to *shut the fuck up already*, which can be met with laughter as much as a peculiar helplessness, from someone who doesn't know any other way to communicate. Getting them to open up - let alone for a decent length of time, and with their undivided attention - can eke out some interesting confessions. To admit faults and guilt that either plague them under it all, or are as much a discovery to the Bard themselves as anyone listening...and, yet, still, just as easily threatened to be swallowed up in "Eh, nevermind"s, as they make exceptions for exceptions. Again, Derse Bards are capable of much more self-awareness than Prospits, and there can be genuine *fear* towards their own unrelenting trainwreck of thought. Ultimately, whether this jackassery is seen as a corruptive poison to their sincere intellectual ambitions, or as the savoir-faire earned from it, it is - tragically - inseparable. Derse Bards must learn to control and focus themselves, lest they surrender their soul entirely to the bit.

Dexter Grif.

We've all met at least one - and sometimes, it's easy to feel like that's one too many. My DMs on Skype and Discord blasted full of fucked up legally-concerning porn, sent by people who either had too much faith I'd stick around, or didn't give a shit if I did. I do not look back on them fondly...but, I did find one Derse Bard I wouldn't trade away, and not just because he never stooped to that. I've seen his family - seen what made him build the walls he did. I've tried to help him, as ineffectual as that usually feels. Still. Made sure he's got people he can trust. We all care about him. I have my hopes.

Cronus is regarded as the worst character in Homestuck - one with the least redeemable or likeable qualities. And I get that. But even in that, there's something some people are going to find familiar. For their sake, I'll never give up on Bards.

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you are the truth teller, the opposition, the new standard - if you're not, why are you still talking?

misaligned minds

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TIER 3 RIVALS: FAE AND ROYALS (THROWDOWN IN THE WAFFLE HOUSE)

Okay, yes, "There is no inherent hierarchy, Tier 1 is an extreme in its own right", blah blah blah. While that's still entirely true, we are using the word "Intensity" for a reason. That we have, certainly, passed a point into human personalities more likely to be confused for pathology or unresolved trauma.

Sure, if you peer at the 8 Classes prior, there's plenty of weirdness to dissect there too, but BOY is it more obvious now.

Maids and Princes both share a powerful work ethic, dedicating their lives to tasks and trades out of little more than love of the game. It's just... Princes are so very *selective* in what speaks to them - what is worthy of their time and not a trap for "suckers" -, that they tend to espouse nobility in what they *don't* do more than anything else. Even when they commit, it's hard to stick to it, which might explain some of their control freak tendencies and pursuit of outside validation. Still, all that "trying too hard to act like you don't care" reflects a legitimate ideal of independence, and it's one Maids stick to tighter - Maids who, themselves, can be awfully difficult to motivate to tasks *outside* what their gut decided for them. Thusly, the common ground of equal force in different directions, and still yet an exception resembling the other's rule; whether undeterred in their momentum, or unshakeable in their indifference, **adamant** against it all (or just **stubborn**). It's just important to take this for as much pride as caution, given all the aforementioned hangups in getting through to these two. Princes actually have a bit of a headstart in self-awareness, where Maid fervor is easy to read as unproblematic - to the Maid as much as anyone caught in their wake. Even when either Class butts heads, it's the confidence in Maids that nurtures arrogance, where Princes might deflate from one carefully chosen question - context specific, but usually between "Who are you actually trying to impress?" and "Why do you treat your friends like this?" It's a helluva' lot harder to get through to Maids, to the point they might admit you had a point weeks or years after any confrontation. These two Classes are Rivals, yes, but peers even beyond that; never take **creation** and **destruction** as moral values.

I don't care which adjective you use. I try to invoke semantics to isolate a single idea with less margin for mistranslation. They both work. One's funnier. Don't overthink it.

If you're feeling **generous**, you could call Sylphs and Bards exactly that (even if "**meddlesome**" is more accurate). They share a spark in considering "constructive criticism" something sacred, unable to see how they're doing you *anything* but a favor; even encouragements can leave you worse off, if they don't read the room first. Okay, yes, both of their respective sections have already been filled with these criticisms, but much *of* that criticism is interchangeable; that whatever Sylphs may bring to the table, or Bards assure ought not to be taken seriously, nothing you do is ever good enough without their input, or approval. Certainly, this can be a familiar snub to those around them, and damage the Tier 3's attempts to be seen as peers (assuming that's even a priority). It's not a matter of thinking they've got everything figured out; just the hungry hunch that something's either missing or superfluous, and everyone else ought to be *just* as enthused about brainstorming it through. Even left to their own devices, there's similarities in what they do to prove themselves, and how much respect they feel owed for that due-diligence. The notable wobble-wobble is that Sylphs put in more inarguable shows of dedication while being...*testy*, towards criticism, and Bards have those strengths and weaknesses reversed. On some level, this is simply the result of following their own advice, amidst more variable motives: legitimizing the advice they'd offer, proving they don't need anyone else's like-minded input, and the very real amount of personal ambitions they have that don't revolve around what they can do for *you*. Passive Class or not, Tier 3's got moxie, though these are the two with the most pride in being the wind behind your sails; what matters is making sure it's a direction either of you want to go in.

...What? I have Sylph and Bard friends. I'm serious. A few. Probably not as much compared to if I could keep my mouth shut, but, you know...

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MASTERS

(MAGNATES, PUPPETS, BRATS)

To **create** is to reconcile; that reality failed to meet the picture in your head, but to bridge the gap regardless of whether that's reality's fault or not. To go any further is to walk past the point of no return: to surrender autonomy (and accountability) entirely, and assume authority entirely.

When improvisation of principle is no longer argued, but glossed over, feeding the certainty of someone who will know what is and isn't just, forever and always. With the strongest faith that beauty, life, and answers lie in the intangible, there are the few who **command** the full cosmic weight of their Aspect. "Wait", you say, "This is still just a mundane human moral framework like the rest, but this sounds like these two Classes are completely divorced from reality. How do they function in society?" Be quiet and listen - the show is about to begin.

"Master Class" requires some clarification. It is directly taken from Homestuck's own lexicon, and I can't speak for all of Hussie's intentions, but I certainly wouldn't sell them as "the best and toughest classes" - hell, even in Hussie's own words, Pages win on "power" (whatever that means). Intensity is, as I've already said, not a measure of quality, potential or otherwise. The designation of "Master" for these two will be kept, in regards to how they treat their Aspect and their role to it...even if, as with so many Classes and their verbs, it seems to go both ways.

Just as well, there's a stigma in the Homestuck community that you shouldn't assume someone is a Lord or Muse cause they're too special - again, they're not, just a baseline personality like the rest. Hussie framed them different in the comic, fine, but the real world comes first, and there's already plenty of Lords all over the fucking place (ESPECIALLY back in the punk house I used to live in). If there's something to take from Homestuck, it is not the wish fulfillment everyone projected of being a super cool ubermentch Class: it is the precise portrayal of all of Caliborn's many, *many* personality flaws. Hell, Calliope isn't perfect either...

LORDS are the human pinnacle of self-assurance, and all that entails. Rain or shine, hell or high water, Lords fancy that they've got it all figured out, and the first step forward is having the right attitude. Gregarious towards those that follow their wake, Lords size up others' complaints and shortcomings quickly, before setting them straight with no-nonsense life-advice. This tutoring (whether it works or not) is bound to reflect a perspective that life is, if not easy, then at least *simple*; you trust your instincts, do what you gotta do, and never stress the details. For some Lords, this means an obnoxious "golden god" routine, boasting about every tiny victory and picking fights whenever possible. Sometimes, there's a knowing unworthiness of it, producing individuals with a tender self-awareness of their sins and shortcomings, but still *ruthless* in reaching for excellence. Others still play it all casual, prideful in an unflappable contentment, with ambitions chosen discerningly enough that they'll never stumble (in any way they'd need to admit). Indeed, while presentation varies - athlete, capitalist, scientist, cassanova, survivalist, soldier, neighbor, messiah -, it is key to recognize it is presentation *first*, and sometimes only that. The moral absolutes Lords live by are antithetical to nuance, which either makes them limited in refusing to engage with it, vapid in failing to comprehend it, or deceitful in manipulating it, all in the name of surface-level petty titles. This isn't to say Lords cannot achieve the herculean labours or wise enlightenment they strive for - only, that their ruthless force of will is exactly the reason they're so tempted to throw friends and facts under the bus to get what they want.

A character in Homestuck claims that "Lords are the most Active of Active Classes", but, how much that does or doesn't reflect on Hussie's own stance, I still don't really agree; they're just an extreme that's best at blocking out the other extreme that composes them, if only because Mages are the *other* extreme on the *same line* that's just more honest about it. The relationship Lords have with masculinity is more pertinent to address, given how they seem to define it: "manly men" should be loud, proud, take no shit, fuck a buncha' babes, be powerful leaders, and shape the world. Course, there's lots of Classes men can have (really, all of them, with transmen adding the whole suite), which will either deprioritize or outright ignore these ideals...which, questions whether these are qualities Lords embody or invented. Look at the big picture, and realize this isn't even a chicken egg situation: it's a feedback loop. Lords have a sense of self inflated beyond reproach, and in the initial instinct to worship it, they will commonly include their own gender, all while pulling on definitions of what that should entail from around them - definitions which ebb and flow with Lord contributions over the centuries, culture to culture. There are left leaning feminist Lords who can throw that all for a loop, which goes double for out-and-out transwomen Lords (Ladies?) whose womanhood is just as passionately worshipped as befits their Class; someone who will arrogantly brag about their tits as much as stock-Lords worship their own cock. Same dif.

...But yes, for the most part, in contemporary society, Lords are macho chauvinist adulterous (seriously, cheating on girlfriends is the free bingo space) douchebags. That one asshole you know who never shut up and never grew up, with no sense of personal space or reading the room, he belongs here. Infinite confidence is unearned confidence, and the last thing you need to do is believe you *can* or *should* be like them. The best Lords - as I define them - as certainly the ones who quit the clichés. At least, some of them.

Where Maids push the boundaries of their Aspect, Lords cut the brakes and smash through every direction at once. Fudged numbers and exceptions *become* the rule, deifying personal bias into wordly wisdom with one palette, one interpreter, and a hundred monologues why. Boisterously asserting all that can be done with principle or in the name of principle, they **command** their Aspect...and, ever fretful to uphold this exemplar image within and without, they are **commanded** by their Aspect, as much slave as master. Lords worship an image of themselves that they've *specifically cultivated* to be worshipped (or 'respected' (or 'pitied but in a cool way')). Optics often play a larger role than results, perhaps reflecting the primordial end-goal of the immaterial nature of Aspects...or, that charismatic insistence might be the *only* way to fulfill their steep aspirations. Be it the heights of egomania, or "chill friend to hang with who never even raises their voice", holes in their story and counter-examples of their behavior provoke a discomfort best described as 'dysphoric'. Too easily, stumbles as little as a spelling error or stubbed toe violate their sense of self and interpreted reality - so to say, they don't like winning as much as they hate losing. No matter what they might say, a Lord's Aspect is not power; it is not divine providence, not force of will, not talent, luck, or law. It's the throughline that pretends to be *all* these things contextually, conveniently; the undercurrent that ties together the deeds they've done, delegated, followed, hallucinated, or only promised. It is *music*, coaxing the world into its orchestra, sung from a tongue with a mind of its own, hiding behind a smile.

Every Lord's got a story about their childhood. Sometimes, it was pretty bad, and the only way out was a fierce independence of deciding their future. Other times, they admit they were spoiled with praise. Sometimes it's a blend of the two, but those ones will only make it sound like the former. I haven't had the best experience with them overall, and a few actual friends won't change the consensus. The bar is low.

The worst of Lords is obvious: violent, narcissistic, treacherous, ignorant, delusional. The egregious are unrepentant, and too many more see lesser shades as 'charm'. It's an overwhelming cascade of self-interest that catches all in its current...and, that can be a lot for even the Lord themselves to deal with. If lucidity comes from anywhere first, it's exhaustion; overwhelmed by expectations, alienated at the sound of their own voice, scorned by a world that refuses their vision. Still, self-aggrandizing and self-pity are two sides of the same coin, and real sore spots may be invoked just because they want something (attention, shinies, sex). This is a shared problem with the entire Active-Attunement branch, but Lord impulsivity worsens the double-think, as any opportunism can be rationalized before

the words finish leaving their lips. A Lord having a heart to heart *may* be sincere, but they won't know if it's not; no matter how tenderly spoken, with secrets they've never told anyone before, it still might be bait to catch something else. Even benignly, trying to listen to the "depths of their soul" with an open mind only floods that mind with junk data that makes the rest sound *sane*. Lords are caught in a pyramid scheme run by their own ego, where reality is unfamiliar outside of it; the reason they bet money and their life on blind impulse, why "big breaks are right around the corner!", is because they're a *sucker*, and it's made them lonely. They're bound to an Aspect and unbound to reality, drowning in fantasy without a Mage's modesty, a Page's caution, or a Maid's dignity to help them survive. Overcoming these pitfalls will take the strength they've always boasted about, but too many rot: a collection of excuses, empty promises, emptier threats, immaterial "connections", bogus talents, lovers who live out of town, all a facade around a simple bully. Even they might realize they're a sham, and that's more pitiable than anything else.

"I SWEAR BABE, I SEXTED HER AS A JOKE"

I should be more sympathetic. I'm a Page, Lords are only two notches off. I know what it is to be lost in the "you" that you want to be, to chase something stupid and wonderful when the whole world tells you no. I *know* it's stupid...but, I still do it, I suppose. It's an ancient Page curse to think we're better than Lords cause we're more polite, more understanding, but really it's just that we're better at pretending we are. We can make that real, just like Lords can make their shtick real - or we can **both** be massive crybabies, while gaslighting everyone (and ourselves) into these sympathetic narratives of how we tried our best and made the most of it all. We were probably just lazy. We were probably just cruel. We were probably just desperate for attention while wearing out the patience of our friends, lost in our delusions of self-importance while chasing skirts. Being a complete shithead is, ultimately, not a Class thing.

Good isn't something you are. It's something you do.

Prospit Lords want to be your best friend, and rarely notice if you ask them not to. Loud, large, and in charge, their lust for life blinds them to reading the room, and they're often caught off guard by a hard "no". Seeing their Aspect as purely heroic, they act with the assumption that anything they come up with fits into that category. No matter how overconfident, their autopilot leans altruistic; they're here to help, they'll listen to your problems (kinda), and even if their solutions suck you can just nod along. They often come off as harmless (if rude), but beyond hour long rants about their sexual conquests and this one dream they had, they're cannier than their charisma implies. Aformentioned Lord trickery is far more unconscious to the Prospit breed, but still *intimidatingly* intricate; even without an angle at the time, acts can be modularly refit to some new scheme and story. Prospitarian pluck emboldens the opportunism *and* the rationalizations; the right hand doesn't ask what the left is up to. Lies are created hastily, defended with fire in their eyes; red in the face, making a scene, rage and sorrow, all for crimes they did 5 minutes ago and will do 5 minutes later as soon as you turn around. Yes, they *can* grow, mature, and hold themselves responsible, but there is almost no way to tell based on their reaction. The truth is only what they want to be true - the sentiment of

both a knowing con-artist, or a desperate baffoon who can't grasp that they're not the hero of this story. Rallying cries and pledges to assist lack a backbone, either meeting catastrophe on blind faith, or throwing people under the bus when things get too hot. There is a lazy, entitled cruelty under it all, and it's difficult to say if that's who they are deep down, or anything they could feasibly overcome. If they fail, if they backslide, if they cheat "Just this once", they'll still smile like a winner. They might believe it. You might believe it too.

"Life is pain. Anyone who says different is selling something."

I have, sparingly, met a few Prospit Lords I trust. It's a delicate trust, one that I won't hold to if I hear a contradicting story from someone else I trust. I've seen some of them do incredible things. I want to say that's enough. But I've seen Prospit Lords deny domestic violence, rape, shitting on top of a toilet, and stealing 200\$ from me and blaming a friend of mine. They were never good lies - that toilet one admitted it all dramatically to some girl he was close to, and thought no one else was listening at that hour - but they always dig in to try and make those lies work. Even to those I get along with, it's hard to ever shake this unnerving sensation, and harder still to forget the times I was right.

There's a lot in fiction who are written as exactly the never-say-die always-smiling heroes they present as; Yakuza 7's Ichiban is a charismatic dreamer, where the game outright systemizes that classic (and medically-concerning) Lord imagination. It's meant to be charming, and I don't mean to say it can't be, but I reiterate the above examples to contrast the damage that kind of one-hand-on-the-steering-wheel sanity can do when you're not *literally* the main character. I mean as another example, Infinity Train's Ryan - while not heinous or anything - is written with both sympathy to his own motives, as much as those who feel utterly fatigued trying to constantly work around his egomania. And while I've guessed this guy on some other Classes, I'm liable to suggest Handsome Jack - make your own conclusions, I suppose.

Heroism is a tricky topic, but, trickier for Lords, when too many just want to pretend to be a hero because it gets them something. Bravery is knowing you're scared and pushing through anyways; if you can't fathom failure, you're just being stupid. Honesty is **telling the truth**. If you know better and won't admit you had a hand in the cookie jar, blubbing like an infant while you think of a million excuses, you're just fucking pathetic.

Derse Lords want to be your worst friend, and don't care if you ask them not to. They're prone to be insistant, impatient, violent, and rude...but, so are Prospits. What marks the Derse variant is not feeling the need to soften these edges; to romanticize, to downplay, to hope some paragon reputation overshadows it. Rather, Derse Lords are defaultly nonplussed at their capacity for belligerence. Plenty embrace it, to the point of embellishing it; a tempermental brute, taunting the world with everything they can get away with, unrepentant and never punished. This vitriolic vulgarity is a starting position for many Derse Lords...and, disappointingly, a throughline for some lifetimes, when tantrums and ignorance keep *working*. It is, however, a hard contrast to the Derse Lords who savour their lucidity, "defusing" into someone who minds their business and can take a joke - maybe even criticism. There's permutations between these two extremes as much as outside of it altogether, as cynical artifice frees Derse Lords to a modicum more control than they'd otherwise have. Tycoon, rebel, revolutionary, lethal killer, gangster, unforgiving tabletop DM, barbecuing retiree; all are valid Derse Lord masks, held by a throughline of 'power' and a sharp edge (go on, ask if you're allowed to touch the BBQ). Throughout it all remains the desire to mentor people, no matter whether it comes across

as (or is) an afterthought. Being so much more openly caustic than Prospits - never shy to tell you when they don't or won't give a shit -, it means more when they really do show kindness...but, ever still, it could be more bunk; ever still, obsessed with appearances. A promise they can't keep, a claim they can't back up, and either aggressively trying to change the subject or stamping out competing voices. There is potential here, sure - real passion, compassion, wit, bravery, pain -, but a Lord who knows better is not necessarily a Lord who won't.

Caliborn is a devout believer that all that matters in life - ALL that matters - is looking at the big picture of everything, breathing it all in...and smashing your fist into it so hard that the crater will never go away, and the ripples will shake everything around it. He's violent to a scale best described as 'religious', ruder than anything I can quote in good taste, more than a little misogynistic, and continually eggs on everyone around him to be at his level of aggressive chaos. Fighting and fucking is wrapped in a paper thin excuse of "art" and "zen", a cheap mockery of Spacebound's tenants that only pushes for more fire. He does WANT people to be around him, to listen, to stop being so useless, but he refuses to do it in a way that's not an ass, and his outright manipulations to get them "on course" give him a hundred options to get his way that don't involve changing who he is. Changing his ways is "weakness", and trying to change the world by breaking it into smithereens is nothing that cannot be healed, ignored, or forgotten by the masses he never truly understood as much as he thought he did. He's a Derse Lord of Time - and so is Johnny Silverhand in Cyberpunk 2077's depiction.

You really think the devs are fans of Homestuck or, more likely, every human being is a goddamn cliché and it doesn't take a genius to spot them? Hell, most of them just end up as Dermott Venture, and we ALL know someone like that. I knew more than a few growing up, and it should be enough to remind everyone that Master Classes aren't rare, and they aren't something everyone should aspire to be - most aren't the rockstars they advertise themselves as, and even the superfamous aren't pretty up close.

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Hail, and take notice; behold, and keep silent. Chosen from above, fated to be sated in every desire dreamed: The Lord, who knows no equal. Intuition and imagination, overflowing in cascading rivers of the vastest soul, singing of the greatest stories, birthed in the loudest symphonies. —

Lost in laurels--

Through your mouth, the will sings "I am divine" - and you, fool enough to think the words your own?—

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MUSES withdraw from the world so profoundly that the vacuum itself *makes* a presence. Graceful and softspoken, they ask for very little (explicitly), agreeable through either polite conflict-avoidance, or cheerleader enthusiasm. Many find themselves in awful situations, and endure insults or jeers that they seem concerningly used to; in healthy environments with friends that care, they're liable to paranoid - or resigned - that everyone will turn on them someday. While averse to receiving gifts and praise (explicitly), they have a deep well of resolve in paying things forward, be that creative passions (art, music, etc) or menial chores. Any excitement in enacting or

"I'd be your voice
In a world that doesn't listen to you
You can sing through my mouth too
We will harmonize
and all will be well"

Muses have instincts to aim the entire weight of their beings onto the lives of other people, and the greater scope of the world around them. This unflinching certainty resolves the frantic anxiety a Sylph has towards things being *almost* perfect, at the cost of smothering their self-worth (and self-preservation) into an almost unsalvageable oblivion. This deep well of guilt serves as fuel for penance, in the name of being the apex people pleaser; Muses are **commanded** under their Aspect, fulfilling other's needs (real or imagined) in the name of values they find comfort in, but not favour. This "Giving Tree" identity can be expressed gleefully, as a panicked fawn-response, sullen obligation, or pretentiously messianic. Muses can make bolder statements with more proactive goals, pushing people forward, but remain ever shy to say they know better...especially if someone pushes *back*. Whether justified as logical, moral, pragmatic, or even religious, Muses can gesture to outside factors as what those around them *ought* to be beholden to - so to say, Muses proclaim their Aspect's **commands**, imposing the Muse's own obedience on others. While a Muse's wants and whims are under tight scrutiny to not interfere with their high-minded principles, those are only the opinions they decided were personal, and all the compassion and self-sacrifice in the world doesn't mean nothing will smuggle its way past their self-deprecation. As inspiration and warning both, a Muse's Aspect is always theirs first: it's a beauty they bear witness to, a party they can't partake in, a justice that will always win in the end, an

order to the universe we're best not to question, and the theatre show we're all playing a part in - whether we ever wanted to or not.

I have never met a Muse from a happy home. I don't think it's even possible.

At minimum, demeaned and made insignificant. At capacity, a thorough and omnipresent crushing of a child's spirit, through both abysmal parenting and unusually cruel happenstance. On average, a heavy presence of religious guilt. Muses carry not just their pain forward, but their faith too. Both inflicted upon them.

I want them to take ownership of the burden they carry. To admit the jeers and scars are far behind them, and what follows lies only in the brain; a battlefield to which they have the home court advantage. But the bitch of it is, while Muses may not be *happy* with what's been done to them, they are *comfortable* with it, and have had entire lives to make it *more* comfortable...so often through the questionable strategies I have catalogued. I am predisposed to take issue with subtle suggestions, but I have seen enough Muses take control and heal. I am sympathetic to those that try, and I expect better of those who don't. Pages are equally liable to manipulate others with self-pity, but Muses aren't as imaginative in seeing themselves without it...

Whatever prestige is supposed to be won by being a "Master Class" seems lost on Muses, and it doesn't take a lot of searching to see why; in the grand game of it all, Lords believe they're a winner, and Muses believe they lost everything a long time ago. The crux of how they frame the world is pedestals for their confidants, and it's only while lifting others up that Muses can be *maybe, possibly*, persuaded out of seclusion. Still, Muses aren't all pure-hearted sugar; there is an alarmingly cold cruelty built into all of them, which reaffirms the "penitent" portion of their worldview. It's a side mostly shown to those they have no interest in accommodating, but even close friends might stretch a Muse's patience thin; like Knights and Sylphs, Muses struggle when they can't process others within their framework, and frequently won't say if they're running out of patience until it's all spent. At the breaking point, a hurricane of emotion and accusation, as liable to stand by broken bridges as putter out into a puddle of apologies, whose appeasement hides how little their mind has changed. While not bossy like Sylphs (as much), they exert more concealed authority, making it difficult to distinguish what they *accept* and what they're trying to *engineer*. Muses are dangerously well-equipped to decide your intentions, inflections, and limits of potential - as though it was decided by the stars, and not someone as liable to fucking *hallucinate* as their fellow Master. Usually, all they want is company and a hug, still nursing a self-perception of helpless burden...but they are kinda scary if they start thinking they're beyond that. They're fueled by tremendously powerful beliefs that all end with "for your own good", and embracing all that cold, dead isolation gives them confidence that can outweigh compassion. At some point, "away from it all" became "above you all". How do you argue with someone who *believes* they have nothing to prove?

AltCalliope might be threatening, but she isn't off-script: both iterations are very much Muses, but only one started throwing their weight around. I've seen far worse in reality.

Prosper Muses are calm, content, and beliefs - which, no matter how much or little grandiosity, still makes them difficult to argue as most definitions of

“happy”. Wearing their colours on their sleeve, wherever they are on a spectrum of Museyness is unabashed and self-reinforcing, to the point that even the doormats will show a surprise amount of grit when arguing they’re nothing more. Messianic types are rather easy to spot, as if *they* think they’re acting selflessly (and not, say, addicted to the sound of their own voice), then that’s the end of it. Even Prospit Muses who aspire to only be “fine and friendly” oversaturate the impression of it; a difficulty gauging complications within and without, to the point of being less offended as just *confused* when it’s brought to attention. All of these permutations reflect their core principles, and refract all they’d rather hide, carried by the same casual certainty shared with Prospit Lords; the world as it should be, their place in it, and the distinctions between good and evil are obvious. They can endure a concerning amount of abuse and stolen autonomy, so long as they can *rationalize* it - and when they can’t, for a moment or the rest of their life, is all the temper they’ve held back until then. Frankly, Prospit Muses can be kind of terrifying, and while the penitent ones clearly agree with that sentiment, the ones who go off the rails are dangerous in how little they grasp the possibility of it; vengeful, petty, prideful, and all without any conscious acknowledgement that they’re even capable of such things. Yet, even to the harmless cinnamon rolls, who have no enemies and no broken promises...is that all they are? Is it working out for their friends? For themselves? There’s an ironic drought of easy answers, regarding an individual most prone to finding them.

None of them have actual cosmic power like Calliope, but Homestuck knew its metaphors; real Muses certainly make it *feel* like they do. A way with words that really can get under your skin and make you think they’ve got you all figured out. I know exactly who they are and what they’re made of, and my blood still runs cold when they want to put the screws on. Course, my circumstances make me a bit more reactive - I didn’t grow up with one exactly, but I did get to hear all the arguments. I’ll explain later.

A *lot* of anime characters qualify here, but I’m tempted to mention MedukaMadoka of her self titled series, with a Hopebound flourish. Again, “uncomplicated”, even as the world around her plainly isn’t. *Persona 5*’s Haru is as sweet, but the teeth I’ve warned about are more obvious - if, still played for laughs, and a loyal companion besides. Ditch anime altogether, and Daenerys Targaryen from *Game of Thrones* sounds right to me as a Prospit Muse, probably on a Timebound bent. Say what you will of the show’s infamous ending, but her steadily increasing ruthlessness through all the seasons is worth a look. Amusingly, Dolores Dei in *Disco Elysium* probably counts as the same Classpect, in the ascetic fiery violence of it all...

Derse Muses sing the same song, but they seem to think it’s (and they themselves are) stupid. Uncertainty and skepticism only drive the Muse’s poor self image further downward, and leave them hesitant to speak the principles they assume no choice but to live by. Most exaggerate these perceived shortcomings into something of a warning label to anyone registering their existence: the failure, the crybaby, the small creature affixing its every tiny request with an apology for bothering you, and an apology for being born. Climbing out of this rut is slow, as Derse Muses finding their confidence seems to manifest first as simply turning this dread into jokes at their own expense - which runs the risk of normalizing this demeaning, or wears down friends trying to get any compliment to stick.

Fact is, Derse Muses are often as emotionally taxing as they are emotionally inspiring, and being keen to recognize this just prompts more penitence in a cognitive death spiral. One (bad) solution is to just isolate: to embrace their numb detachment, resigned to bitter cynicism, giving an uneasy “sure, whatever” to anyone’s enthusiasm, and to not get anyone’s hopes up that they’re going to do anything more than just try to survive another day. Another is to find someone - usually just one, or a small handful of folk - that they really click with, praying that the praise they give evens out the praise they receive; that they qualify as more of a “symbiote” than “parasite”. Whatever other resolutions may exist, one towers over the rest: to kill the doubts that follow them with their own reassurances, and see how that moxie can help others too. There are Derse Muses with all the poetic passion of Prospits - just with more snark, and even genuine optimism. It’s a tricky thing, but getting there will certainly take more self-reflection than self-flagellation.

For a minute on the internet, “Chainsaw Man”, “Bocchi the Rock”, and “The Amazing Digital Circus” were all simultaneously the talk of the town. Respectively, the characters of Kobeni, Bocchi herself, and Pomni were put in close comparison with each other. There are some amusing quips about how they’re “literally the same character”. From where I’m standing, comments like that are more right than intended. Previous editions of this document noted Elphelt of *Guilty Gear Strive* as aspirational proof of what else is possible, but upon further consideration, maybe she’s Prospit? If so, there may be slimmer margins to imagine what Derse Muses can manage, as far as self-acceptance goes...

Personally, I’ve known quite a few Derse Muses. Despite all the mysticism surrounding them in Homestuck discourse, they’re really not hard to spot: they like cookies, hugs, small animals, and they cry alot. I have had poor experiences of someone peeking through the crocodile tears, and elsewhere...I don’t have words for it. Nothing I can put here. You all can make your own friendships, and learn what lessons you want from the scars.

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Musey musey musey musey

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TIER 4 RIVALS...? (NO-SHOW)

Homestuck listed only 14 Classes - and that was all of them. Congrats. I guess. Certainly, we have a perfectly fine list of Pairs...if not Rivals, or anything else. Lords are Active, Muses are Passive, and if you draw the line here, then they remain “peerless”; that there is no stepping stone past Princes and Bards, Adaptive and volatile, that can match them. I want you to ask yourself - does that make sense to you? The pedestal that puts these personalities on? The gap this leaves on the scale? Could you imagine anyone you know who would fit into that empty space, and all the ways you

could use the tools here to ballpark what it would look like in the first place? Do you feel you're not *allowed* to wonder?

"Final Boss Personality types" are a passable flourish for a fiction, but incongruent with the world - as I know it, and I hope you too if you realize the implications. Hopefully, what's been written above already does its job in demystifying and deromanticizing the two "Master" Classes. Hopefully, all the Rival sections thus far make for an intuitive cross comparison - one Homestuck itself never explicitly designated. Hopefully, to you reading this, what is potentially true is more interesting than what is only established canon.

But whether you believe me or not, I hope you're curious enough to keep going.

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INTERMISSION

(THE TIP OF THE ICEBERG)

Thank you for reading this far. If you instead skipped to this section, I would like to state for the record (again) that this document works best taken as a whole, rather than examined piecemeal. Every Class ought to be considered next to its Pairs, Rivals, and all its relevant mutations through intensity. Taken together, it's far easier to get a sense of both the constants and the conflicts between them all; to understand the rhythmic patterns of the differences, in all its cohesive symmetry. Still, I suppose I can't stop you.

I see it pertinent to draw a line here, after all these Classes taken in *relative* isolation. These are the fourteen Classes Homestuck made clear of in its text - and thus, the fourteen that fans of the comic accept as "canon". Even then, much is still up for debate...or, was, before Hussie threw that curveball. For so much of Classpecting history, going on 10 years of it, there was only so little concrete data; Thieves and Rogues, Princes and Bards, Lords and Muses, only these six were recognized as Pairs, and only a handful of verbs were explicitly named. Everyone else has had their own rationale as to which is Active or Passive, and what verb is shared between them. If you stop here and take this document in bisected isolation, you could hang it next to those others as one more "traditional" hypothesis, bereft of the grand heresies soon to follow.

To non-Homestucks (who are probably confused as to why "Homestuck" is the chosen nickname of "A Homestuck fan" (I don't get it either)), I think it's important to take a breather here too. Hopefully, what's been established is enough to, at least, conjure some pause for thought; that, if not an unambiguous bullseye, there's still a passing curiosity of "That description was suspiciously close to the highs and lows of my uncle Frank" or "That *was* exactly the same rationale my ex used before I dumped them". If that is the fence you're sitting on, stick around, cause I've got some more

juice to my argument to come. There's still some shades of paint that may complete this visceral picture of a man's most tender secrets and shames.

...But what a bitch of a way to do it, right? The vulnerable, the embarrassing, the inescapable, the haunting. Every compulsion we cannot change about ourself, while the most likely explanation for why is that it was beaten into us as children - metaphorically, or literally. Homestuck's in universe mythos of Classpects as heroic titles and grand destinies often gives people an unspoken impression that they *ought* to be more aspirational...but, increasingly, it feels like such creative flourishes were meant as a consolation prize, especially when the story - amidst its absurdisms and alien vistas - didn't shy away from every trauma and burden inflicted on its youthful cast.

Classpects are, when you take away all the fancy speeches and poetry, existentially terrifying. An inescapable "everyone gets 1" mental disorder so fundamental it defines our sense of order; a trauma loop of how we survived as children, and our own tragic imitation of the misdeeds we witnessed. It is who we feel we have to be, casting a shadow on who we can't be; it is the values we assign to the world, and how we wish others would fit into our story, all of it reflecting and refracting some flickering flame of something we wanted once, but long forgot the reason. We help people how we wish we'd be helped, hurt them how we fear we'll be hurt, and compete with the only values we care about. Classpects infest the root of our psyches, and follow us for decades as a reminder of abuse, weakness, pain, all with the added insult of almost certainly being attached to our birth gender - which is either limiting in a way you don't think about, or a deep violation in a way you wish you could ignore.

All in all, I see no reason not to keep the consolations - but not without the addendums I mean sincerely. We *can* salvage this ideological hunger into something manageable; to recognize its every seductive rationalization, and tame it into service. I mean, okay, I am mostly just talking about *therapy* and like, *growing as a person*, yes, but this is still a book on every way you and everyone around you is predisposed to lie to yourself. It's a more efficient use of your time to know those dead-ends ahead of schedule - and hey, I am predisposed to want to be accurate on such matters.

Predisposed or not, you can decide for yourself how far to trust me. I certainly think one of the worst things anyone can do is, in this or any other personality system, act as though the titles are unambitious claims of strength, speciality, and even sovereignty. Classes may be inclined to see themselves as empathetic, loyal, intelligent, or courageous...but all it really amounts to is that they *want* it, and pulling it off is a completely different matter. I am sympathetic to Homestucks who feel they can't be a Class just because they suck at what they're "supposed" to be doing, though I'm equally disgruntled at those who feel the Classpect they chose is some kind of credential to the legitimacy of their speeches. For some, it's not meant to be reflective of their personality but, rather, a substitute for charisma, hoping it makes them "special" and "interesting" to their audience of friends. Sometimes I really wish I had arrived at this system by focusing on what worked with Myers-Briggs, but noooooooooooooooooooooo...

Like I said much earlier: I mean to weed out the romantics who would fuck with my flowcharts. What's compiled here can be offensive, but even outside of my petty grumblings, there's some wars worth fighting that *need* that offense. For example: congratulations ye bigoted loudmouths of "The Manosphere"! What you've been calling "Alpha Males" was just Lordisms, and *none of that* makes you the tribal leader and trendsetter you think it does! Honestly, fuckasses like that make it difficult to remember the good qualities in Lords...

Look, my point in all this rambling is that Classpects - as I and others have seen them, in this hypothetically tangible state, rather than fictional aspirations - kinda suck. They're more humbling than empowering, if not without their advantages, and never without a measure of charm. Maybe we can't escape them, but we don't *have* to, in

order to be our own people; two individuals with a ditto'd Classpect are still going to have some major differences between them, and *still* any number of paths they can take through life from that point on. They're not your entire personality - just a catalyst in it, a mechanism, a monkey on your back. The *real* aspirations, the *real* choices, the *real* things that make use special...that's not here. That's not Classpects. This is about coming to grips with who we'll always be, not who we choose to be. I'm hoping I can ensure that, for whoever reads this, the latter is not perverted by the former.

The good news is that it's easier than it looks. The bad news is you have to do it twice.

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INVERSION (FLIP IT TURN WAYS)

Classpects are an intimidating series of instincts, but it raises the question of what we are outside of it. What if you go off script? What if you just say no? While it's critically important to remember the nuances of who we are as individuals, there is unfortunately little breathing room between the Classpect...and a second, angrier Classpect. The third relationship amidst Pairs and Rivalries, and by far the most important one.

People *change*, sure, but certain paths of change are within the realm of everything this document insists is so predictable; brimming under the surface, baked into us since our minds first properly developed. It is our exceptions, our hypocrisies, the roles we run to when we're sick of ourselves, how we help others in ways we don't allow ourselves to be helped, the sides we ignore despite them going off anyways, the shape we take when we need to be *more*. Call it your masculine/feminine/other-kind-of-neither side, call it the persona shadow, call it personal demons, call it *whatever you want* - but there's a second side to every coin.

Every Active has a separate language for accommodating others, every Passive has a distinct voice of their own under the surface, and telling the difference helps us blend them into better combinations. Class Inversions **invert the Aspect as well**, meaning that we are fully capable of invoking and accepting that which disgusts us for too long of our lives. The terms we set, the lines we draw, the amount we allot, how much we even choose to admit, that is all personal - but at it's best, we are prepared for any situation, our needs and others, with either side of our personal axis to draw from and *hopefully* enough contentment to defer to those better suited. You want to untangle everything inside, find clear lines for who you are to yourself and who you are to the world? Here's everything you're working with - you decide where it goes, where you aim it, and how important it is to you. Your life is your story; the less control we exert, the more it belongs to the people around us, or the people that made us.

Despite many years of debate, Hussie (at least, someone on their behalf) has claimed that the long controversial "Inversion Theory" is debunked, and irrelevant to Homestuck.

I will argue that every character in Homestuck already follows Inversion, and indeed Classes would be completely unrecognizable if not for the twin impulses making up who they are, regardless of whether they realize it or not.

And even if that's not enough, every single goddamn human being in reality displays Classpect Inversion that it doesn't matter what we apply to Homestuck or not.

Page of Time I might be, I get some kicks out of seeing people express themselves, in ways they didn't know they were allowed to; that free-will that ekes out, away from the harder definitions. For a long time, I was mad that even *that* counted as another Classpect - but hey, at least it's one with nuance.

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INVERSION CONT: QUICK GLOSSARY OF TERMS I MADE UP

(I'VE GONE MAD WITH POWER)

Impulse: We have to recontextualize Classpects as a whole, as it's impossible (or at least, unprecedented) to have one without it's mirror twin. Every single Class described only has its habits *because* of the interplay; a Passive Class with pride, breaking points, and self-loathing is expressing their Active side, as much as the ways Active Classes show compassion (or at least concern) invokes their Passive. This isn't a Class "changing", it's just shifting the spotlight to which side is highlighted more, with no amount of conscious supression or invocation changing that neither will ever truly go away. Therefore, there are two impulses, and both want seperate things at the same time, but not in a way where they can't both win. For simplicity, these will be referred to as a "[Class] impulse"; i.e., Class X has an X impulse and a Y impulse, Class Y has a Y impulse and an X impulse, but this is universal and will never involve Z or B or whichever. Confusing the two impulses is, if nothing else, unfulfilling, so harmonizing them will be the consistently reccomended endgoal.

{Primary/Main}{Secondary/Inverted}: While both impulses exist, Classes aren't a pointless distinguishment: a Mage of Space and an Heir of Time will both want and think roughly the same things, but their first Aspect is considered "good" (usually) and their inverted Aspect is considered "untrustworthy/unfamiliar/evil" (usually). Learning to respect and utilize these talents is important, but doesn't change one's default state (and personal favourites).

To elaborate on what I mentioned at the start of the brochure, my SpaceWitch friend has proposed the idea that there's something to explore in an even fuller Inversion - inverted intensity, so you swap 1-4 and 2-3. This loses the whole "two halves of the same mind" practical examination I'm focusing on, but there *might* be something to it beyond acknowledging the absolute polar opposites of a Class. People get pent up or burnt out too easy, and that's kind of reflected when a Class half-asses their Inverse. I'll try to only mention it in passing, since it's speculation on top of speculation on top of speculation, all on the topic of real human lives with alot to lose.

True [Class]: As above, while the inverted impulse is a valid filter to thoughts and actions, and Classes can learn (or will accidentally display without prior knowledge) attributes and attitudes of their Inversion, it doesn't change their default. Our hypothetical Mage of Space and Heir of Time would definitely have a lot of things to talk about and common life experiences, but their priorities, focus, and habits only reinforce original classification - it's best to think of an Inversion as an "honourary" or "substitute" Class.

Mind you I am 100% down for ascended Class names; I mean "Thief" and "Knight" fit together as "Mercenary" so good it's fucking maddening it's not canon! Even the coloured pajamas Homestuck uses would go GREAT with some contrasting palletes!

Misfire: When an inverted (or, on rare occasion, primary) impulse is either ignored or consciously suppressed, it still manifests in a way where an individual is still "verbing their Aspect". Without the benefits of moderation or intent, this expression of beliefs is usually pretty far from anything positive, mishandling the potential to make meanings or romanticize healthy states of being, especially in regards to life's curveballs. **Do not try to "pick" which side of yourself is "correct" out of misplaced shame.** No arrangement of Classes or Aspects is evil; precarious, dangerous, volatile, absolutely, but never evil, never useless, and never without another side to balance it out.

The idiot that tries to only feed one wolf is the idiot who hasn't bothered to tame a feral wolf that even *they're* admitting they can't get rid of. It's a fucking wolf. Use it to pull sleds and eat people. No bad dogs, only bad owners.

..."Verbing the Aspect" kinda sounds like innuendo, actually...

Invert (verb): As previously stated, Class Inversions are always ~~active~~Wait ~~that's confusing~~ functioning in at least some regard, and define all manner of behaviors for either Class; to picture a Class impulse in complete isolation is, ultimately, a matter of pure hypotheticals. If the term "Invert" is used, it is meant to refer to the consciously recognized shift an individual goes through where they drift away from, or reject, their primary identity - or, the second identity, if done again. If there was ever a moment in the previous descriptions where a Class was described as being prone to behaviors of "retiring" from their intrinsic objective, or simply having conniptions that do not fall in line with the discussed programming, we were almost certainly discussing Inversion the whole time.

Free will is found in the cracks of Classpects, not anything we put up front. I am predisposed to say that, but given the evidence, I can't imagine saying anything else.

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INVERSION CONT 2: ASPECT AKIMBO (ATTUNE, ADAPT, ALCHEMIZE)

If we're going to be discussing how Classes smush together, it's important to quickly preface how Aspects fit as well. They're only oil and water if one were to try and invoke either in the same way one does their primary, which is why it must be tackled on our own terms - a deeply personal thing, to redeem all we fear and turn our eyes from. While it's unlikely something this brief will appease everybody, it might be enough to nudge longstanding ennui on a healthier path. Remember, the more the two Aspects start to sound like the same thing, the more progress you're making.

I'll be honest, what's coming is kind of sacchrine. Hopeful. Maybe edging on "telling you how to live your life" even more than I have already. Somehow, it feels more suspicious if it's optimistic, you know? I dunno it's just...this *is* the nice stuff. This is, too often, just the way people finally figure themselves out and feel at peace. Isn't it kind of exciting to be able to, you know, systemize that?

This stuff helped me close the gap with stuff I'd been wrestling with for decades. It's not like anything would've done it; an old internet quiz put together by a fan back in 2012ish gave me "Page of Space". I knew I was a Page, I knew I had "a" creative streak, but even though I tried not to overthink it, I still felt like my impulsivity and impatience were interfering with it. I felt more like a failure than ever, like all my family's violence and trauma had corrupted what was I was supposed to be. Even if I hadn't read "Page of Space", it's not like anyone else had any good advice for who I was or what I should do; people have been telling me to slow down my entire life, always seeing what they want to see, or what never was.

The Extended Zodiac, getting back into Homestuck...none of it give me any *new* words to articulate myself. It just gave me a pat on the back for everything already brewing, what I can do with it, all with the acknowledgment that I am still 2 notches off from Caliborn (and, perchance, I'm not doing much different). I've been doing my best to see how well this stuff helps others, and I've had some nice moments of helping them close the gap with their demons - or hearing their epiphanies, and being just a little salty I had it down in print for years.

I'm not a nice person - but I am an optimistic one.

WE'RE ALL WE'VE GOT

SPACE AND TIME: I would say "unfettered contentment, as both witness and participant to life's absurd temporary"...but, the nature of this is to help you make your own pretty pictures, not sell my own as gospel. The fact is, in unison, the Aspects become increasingly difficult to make into reductive synonyms or synopsis. The assembly is your business, outside of my capabilities or concern. I'm just trying to get you motivated.

Space and Time have the least and most incentive to change respectively. For Time, it's paradoxical status as "the belief against beliefs" breaks upon reflection, like Wile E. Coyote over a cliff. As inevitably as it fetishizes inevitabilities, the Time Aspect cannibalizes itself: the "belief of the material world" was *always* hypocrisy. To imagine the vast, uncaring universe has any kind of objective victory condition is undone by the whole "uncaring" part. From the asinine ambitions of "money, sex, and power", to even the single goalpost of "survival", all is undone by simply being *thorough* with the philistine's eye the Timebound always had; that even if our name and deeds might persist after us, it is not truly us, and still fades regardless. So why obsess over it anyways? Why be chained *spiritually* to the material? To elevate base instincts into a would-be Super-Id? Space's answer defaults to treating these things as nothing but momentary distractions to be discarded of; weakness, immaturity, and poison. Whether this is a personal philosophy in ridding themselves of pain and want, or something religiously grander, is

besides the point: the Spacebound are hypocrites. This isn't even because of any red embers of spite and sneering competition they're bound to be holding back, but because this pull to emptiness and empathy is, itself, just one more petty catharsis of the ape brain. Both Aspects are fundamentally compromised because they *comprise* the *fundamentals* - and there's only so far you can get by sticking your fingers in your ears and ignoring half of the argument.

Me? Bitter?

Time is as much of a artsy-fartsy delusion as it accused Space of being - which it still totally is. Space is as much mindless animal instinct as it accused Time of being, but neither of these contradictions can undo themselves, or each other. In absolute, an evil: Time, explicitly, in so much fascistic or omniscient, but Space just the same, crying for a gnostic rapture that would unmake all the colour and contrast that makes this crazy planet beautiful. In these hard juxtapositions of ideal, those bound are best to submerge themselves in antonym: live wire in the silent garden, artist in the screaming meat fuck. The Timebound can find a rush in finally snapping away from the hustle and bustle that's defined their every thought, and the Spacebound can romanticize letting go *after* getting their hands dirty holding on first. Time's obsession with the material can evolve from projection to honest deference, where Space flourishes in a world it wrote off; that when nothing matters, *everything* matters, and the complete lack of any "grand scheme of things" means every possible concept of every possible thing is exactly as significant as we choose for it to be. Space's concepts can be convictions to be fought and killed over, while Time can expand surrender into the multicoloured meatscape of humanity - that every loss is someone else's win, and to die is one more great adventure. Between the bindings of "I gotta" and "I cannot intervene", there's something far more honest to our autonomy: "I'm gonna do whatever the fuck I want, and whatever happens, happens". Time would rather imagine itself a corpse or machine, just as much as Space would imagine itself a flower or cloud, but purity kills potential. Only together do they make where the falling angel meets the rising ape: a miracle of matter, a god unto itself, a human being.

Always found it funny how often punk rock blends into Buddhism - just, not often the other way around. I wish there was, in sympathy to this chronic part of me that whispers "the demon Mara makes alot of good points". It can be awful tiring having the closest thing you call a soul always being seen as evil. You can only "own it" so often.

There was a Scarlet Pimpernel musical, apparently. I liked the "Into the Fire" song. Oh, and "Passing Through" by Kaden MacKay. Less Time-specific and more synchronized, I recommend "Where the World Begins and Ends" - personal favourite. Music always says more than words alone can.

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INDULGANCE, WITHIN REASON
HEART AND MIND

It is the signature of the Heart and Mind Aspects to mythologize their emotions and goals respectively, blossoming either into a flower that overtakes the other. Regardless of favouritism, this is the same framework - even moreso than it initially appears. There are logical approaches to life, but no logical destinations, no "objective success". Mind is less machine as it is simply faux-superego, chasing objectivity with the most palatable cultivation of subjectivity; why speak for only yourself, when you can - no, *should* - speak for everyone? More than ever, it should be apparent why the Mind Aspect rests between Space and Hope, as there is a longing to escape the more material inverted Aspect - which is only, you know, *literally* personal bias. Every drawback of the Heart Aspect should be much more plainly obvious: the most resolute arguments of "Me and mine outweigh the many", "It would be a crime to change who I am", and so much shamelessly unjustified "Nuh uh". The insularity of the mindset makes it so difficult to entertain any kind of advice or counter-argument, where even Classes that would reject and reshape who they are remain *adamant* in doing it in their own hyper-personal method. Run rampant, the Mindbound demonize all errant emotions until the depressive shame creates a feedback loop, and the Heartbound mythologize identity to the point it is divorced of any brain it supposedly represents.

Adamant is not bolded. I wrote this before I officialized rivals. It still works. Kinda.

Like before, cohesion comes best from recognizing that it was *always* compromised. Sure, Heart is openly self-sabotaging, openly unpleasant, openly illogical - yet, does its efforts to systemize and organize itself not create a logic in protest? Is there not inherent categorization in which desires are more "deserving"? Whether this is bleedover or a true mirror of Mind's systemization, it goes both ways: is the "calm chessmaster" anything besides another mask? Is the culling of emotion not simply picking favourites? If the Heartbound enshrine their obtrusive multifacets, is Mind's craving for apersonal enlightenment not one more? If the Mindbound seek unbiased clarity, is it not hypocritical to reject the signature of their own perspective, rather than admit that there *is* no way to see outside of your own eyes - to think a thought bereft of the influence of your own gut? In synthesis, the system of the soul, where intellect admits what it has to gain, where one *selects* which masks define the whole, and where understanding and empathy beget each other. To say anything more is to kill the point, and take the adventure of self-discovery from those who cherish it the most.

Nepeta still deserved better.

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DARE TO DREAM
HOPE AND RAGE

Hope and Rage are likely the most default combative of any Aspect Pair, but this facet only highlights the commonality of “defiance”. One champions beliefs strong enough to break any ceiling, while the other lives in grim worship of the ceiling and its capability to beat back the petulant. While Class will determine a lot, both Aspects are an accelerant to argument, provoking one to speak their mind more than most; be it to the moral matters of yearning vs. disappointment, something bent to be construed in such a way, or the entirely banal. Again, very combative elements, but it’s hard not to hazard some of this vigilance stems from internal friction; schisms without from schisms within. The Hopebound’s fantasies are - even in the most medically concerning, utterly divorced-from-reality extremes - running adjacent to every cohesive argument to settle down and be realistic. Likewise, for as much as Ragebounds can be curmudgeons, their wariness towards blind faith is parallel to a genuine capacity to entertain it, which may bolster the notion that such things are more seductive to the average person than they really are. This duality extends outside of explicitly recognized keywords and aesthetics, with Hopebounds grimly resigned to insistent optimism in lieu of anything else, and Ragebounds wound up in aforementioned conspiratorial leanings; a certainty in what is said behind closed doors, of hidden agendas concealed behind a smile, all on a lot less evidence than they supposedly champion. “You’re bullshit and everything you say is bullshit”, and “Trust me - I just know” are popular sentiments from those bound to *either* Aspect, regardless of how sour or sacchrine the actual contents are.

Homestuck has two Ragebounds: a Bard and a Prince. Likewise, there is also a Bard and Prince of Hope, but alongside major cast member Jake English, a Page. What’s funny is how this has permanently altered the public discourse around Rage and its relationship to its opposite. Whether or not people acknowledge that “destroyer” Classes won’t give a straightforward picture, the fandom still recognizes Rage primarily in its most twisted depictions: broken truths, madness masquerading as sanity, etc. The reverse sentiment can still happen, but Jake’s trajectory through the comic saw much more uncomplicated depictions of sunshine and make-believe, and this clearer picture eclipses Rage’s muddy picture; to many, Rage is more “Diet-Hope” than a clean opposite.

Yes, sometimes an obsession with truth results in a stubborn faith without support or evidence. Yes, sometimes Hope is about forcing your beliefs upon reality, until they *become* true. But trying to dictate the hard lines between subverting Rage and bolstering Hope - or the other way around - is a fool’s errand, as they were always the same thing. Homestuck dwelled enough on these specific two to lay the groundwork for everything I’m talking about right now, and the genie won’t go back in the bottle. Many fans deny Inversion theory while uncritically espousing an explicit example, and don’t investigate how natural the process can be observed in the other Aspects.

There’s something to be said about how the “reality and fantasy” angle is similar to the Space and Time axis, but this is so much less existential contemplation as much as rallying cries. When equally nurtured in an individual, Hope and Rage create a truly powerful momentum against any and all opposition. All the sweetest sentiments and promising possibilities the Hope Aspect can muster won’t *get* anywhere without the pragmatism to engineer them, or the raw wrath to stand by them in the face of everything;

if the odds really are a million to one, you need to be able to admit that, or you won't have any chance at all. While Rage can fester into bitterness and indiscriminate harassment, there is a thread of direction even in its lowest points: a great indignation at any who would make a fool of you - and, perhaps, those you care about. Hope and Rage create individuals driven to question what is, expose or champion falsehoods (sometimes *both*), pick apart the foundation, demand better in moral outrage, tearing away at life's shit-coated ugly while capable of the most honest appreciations of what can't be removed - and perhaps, why it *shouldn't* be. With practice and maturation, they are capable of miracles that move mountains, or the gentle grace of making everything feel okay when nothing else can be done. The silver lining and the stormcloud - but always better with the thunder to back it up.

Hussie claimed "Hope" as the most powerful Aspect. Even if you don't agree, I think it's still important to know why they said it, just as with the praise to Pages. Hell, I know two Rogues of Rage...

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MAKE YOUR OWN FATE LIGHT AND VOID

It is the Lightbound's rigid definitions of their primary Class that makes them the most in need of Inversion - or rather, to have it directly pointed out to them all the many times they've *already been* their Void Class, expressing Void-flavoured sentiments. Then again, what truly is "Void-flavoured"? Even the Voidbound themselves find it difficult to articulate, and defaultly prefer it that way. Their Void qualities are avoided in either an honest shrug of "Don't look into it", or ignoring the discussion (and any implications the discussion could lead to) with such casual conviction that one might suspect they're suffering from a concussion. That saturated Void can find reason its own lack of reason is not a common strategy; some lack the courage to stand by it, and some simply aren't willing to fully commit to preaching indecision (which is hilarious). Amidst everything they're (eternally) mulling over, the Voidbound will still invoke (or stumble into) sentiments of their Light-y Inversion: confident jumping-to-conclusions cohesion, all suspiciously close to their inverted Class. Sometimes, this can make them more likely to appear *as* that Inversion, or at least more argumentative that its a possibility. Just the same, Lightbounds already have a spotlight on everything(?) that makes them who they are, with all the notable signs of an inverted Class either half-integrated as "nuance", or disregarded as pure coincidence. Ultimately, these people have had entire lives to connect the dots, or mark dots antithetical to connection, or erase dots, or make new ones, or seperate which collections of connections exist and how they intersect, and it's all *very*, *VERY* personal to them.

So, Light thinks Void is either Also Light or Literally Nothing, and Void either thinks it might be Light, maybe, or Something Unspecified, or it doesn't think at all. Obviously, the solution to this fucking rat's nest is to go ultraviolet and kill Void's ability to hide. You wanna know what Void is? You want to undo the illusion and all the headache-inducing mental blots of trying to process it? It is freedom without Breath's purposeful optimism, subjectivity without needing Heart's violent passion, and emptiness without Space's wide perspective. The Void Aspect asks for nothing and provides nothing - in doing so, it reflects the individual clearer than any other. Whim, hobbies, emotions, ideas, only ever sorted as unsorted, all shrouded in a shrug; the associated Class embraces or encourages this state, then does whatever it wanted to do in probably the closest display of free will this system can produce. And yet, a side will always fixate on those constrictive conclusions of "destiny" - one more delusion, as all Aspects are. Symbols are not of the material world, not a tangible thing, but they run alongside it; man cannot exist without making a narrative over what's in front of us. It is Void that tempers these cathartic calls to action, sorting legend and history, myth and nonsense. In the retreat, Void makes its own meanings, and appreciates those that have none yet - although "don't rush to conclusions" is a conclusion itself, possibly from someone who's trying to avoid what the Light might see. There is no need to lie about what did or didn't happen - only to *choose* how relevant we want it to be, drawing constellations in the sky. Everyone has a story, and we all get to choose what it is - even if we think it was chosen for us, and even if we think we never did.

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WARTS AND ALL LIFE AND DOOM

The Life and Doom Aspects are each a deep, multifaceted palette of ideology, constantly in flux in the lives of those bound. Still, one would not be *inaccurate* to sum them up as "Growth and Decay" - or, reductively, "Success and Failure". Life isn't just about community and therapy, but doing it all with a *smile*...and Doom is, pointedly, both an incentive to frown, and a suspicion that so many smiles are either forced or fragile. Of course, this goes both ways, as Life can be equally suspicious that no one is beyond saving - which is to say, becoming a "productive, accepted member of society". There is much to be said about Lifebounds not recognizing their ideals are "uncomplicated", not "better" - and there is equal criticism in Doombounds preferring things "complicated" rather than "better". I mean that's what it all boils down to, right? Health and happiness? That ideal balance of what you give and what you get? Life and Doom want *precisely* the same thing, but are waging war over only what is so contextual: social obligations, participation, endurance, attitude, and the coin toss of whether you shape up or spiral. To anyone not bound to this axis, these are factors

that are significantly easier to ascertain and accept oneself for. To those that *are* bound on the axis, it is anything from a harmful compulsion, a moral indignation, or a superstitious rant on the soul of mankind.

For the Lifebound, trying to create a perfect happy community from the top down is, itself, a doomed effort, where being unable to admit the problems makes those problems worse. For the Doombound, “rot for rot’s sake” extremism starves both the inverted Life Aspect’s cravings, and the basic human need for socialization. What compromises and comradeship come about are still tentative, if misery and isolation are still seen as some “default” that all will - or *should* - return to. If the goalposts are placed exclusively on 100% flawless output or all-consuming pessimism, then the mundane subject matter of friendships, reputation, and depression all become warped beyond recognition. To lecture others on the dread they *should* be feeling, the stability they *should* be wanting, all reflects far more on the zealous conceptions of the individual saying it. To the industrious Lifebound and the decisively corrosive Doombound, the same advice: engineering an ideal social environment will ultimately require cooperation, built from many preferences and perspectives that - 5 times out of 6 - will not involve an axis that obsesses on it. To manifest anything, one has to understand the minutia of health and sickness first, without demanding storybook endings - even grim ones. The romance comes from appreciating what’s already there, and intentionally invoking greater imagery if it helps in the one thing both Aspects agree on: comfort. In radiance, in rot; from ability, to need. In every result and process, every struggle or resignation, a potential for beauty, tying together the best and worst of all of us.

Just go watch the first two Addams Family movies.

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SENTIMENTAL SCARS **BREATH AND BLOOD**

The Breath and Blood Aspects both encourage leaders, but what’s peculiar is how little that makes sense upon examination. Breath breaks away from the old, forgives sins, forgets grudges, soothes all pain, and insists that the past is the past; while this assurance of an optimistic future is innately magnetic, why does it care about who listens, let alone who follows? Blood is very much sins, grudges, punishment, sacrifice and staying in the past...but then, why coordinate to goals at all, if suffering itself is a core tenant? The proclivity to leadership is built out of *both* Aspects, regardless of which one takes credit. In a vacuum, they are only reliefs to that role; either seduced to new frontiers, or humbled back into line. Yet, with these Aspects doing their best to avoid internal conflict, the balance between them is fickle. Blood and Breath still too easily redouble themselves into

absolutes judged worthy by itself, where Breathbounds have completely relieved themselves of the burden of others burdens, and the Bloodbound harden grudges and expect debts until they become convinced that *everyone* isn't "pulling their weight". In this haze of immediate intuition, both Aspects will create people too goddamn pleased with themselves to realize no one's happy - not even them. It is principle beyond interrogation; only "Freedom" and "Family". To the Bloodbound, you're either with them or against them...and in regards to the Breathbound, it can be hard to feel like you're ever "with them" in the first place.

So many of the problems listed stem from Breath and Blood's vaguery. While all Aspects are, essentially, a "vibe", nothing else is quite as nebulous as these two; even Void has more discernable imagery, in its effort to be the exact opposite. Sure, to personify all that wandering optimism as the wind is apt, as much as conceptualizing brotherhood in chains and scars...but those bound to either have the least incentive to care. That whatever prose comes out of their mouth isn't something to dwell on, compared to more meaningful substance - or, just at all. To the Breathbound and Bloodbound both, Inversion is an invasion of new and unfamiliar vibes, invoked by circumstances they likely weren't overthinking in the first place. It is those moments when you realize that all that was familiar simply no longer is; when you realize the past didn't just catch up with you, but maybe never left, and you're only noticing now; it is the fossilized smile of a childhood friend in a photograph, their face relishing a moment shared with a "you" that feels like a stranger. All of this is personal, subtle, and highly contextual on the happenstance of someone's life - but to be keyed in to that? A natural at addressing and invoking such thoughts? It's all there on the table, if they can find their middle. To use experience, and not blind zealotry, to make their choices: what traditions to keep, what innovations to risk, what friendships to hold on to, to let die, or to reignite from nothing. There's so much we can't change in life, and so much we can't stop from changing - it's just how things are, or at least how they worked out. There's people we wish were still with us, people that stuck around anyways, and always the wind at our side if no one else is. It could be better. It could be worse. It is, at least, always ours.

I still love my brother. I always will.

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Now, how to fit that full picture inside the canvases we already discussed...

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TIER 1 INVERSION: FATE AND FREE WILL (WELCOME TO THE BIG LEAGUES)

With all the high-strung high-stakes we've discussed, it's easy to diminish the importance of those most subtle and (hopefully) most humble. Hypothetically, this document could have been arranged to explain the most intense first and work backwards, or any combination, and it wouldn't change that Prophets and Magicians are extremes in their own right. They can draw strength from others or themselves, and do either so elegantly they have no incentive to try both; without such greivous *needs*, potential is a hypothetical that jeopardizes more than entices. Sure, they have their sore spots and rough patches, dealing with it and not making it anyone else's problem...but you turn those few weaknesses into strengths, you wind up with more than the sum of your parts.

As soon as you **know** your fate, you can **change** it.

MAGES AND HEIRS are the living, breathing, manifested form of that old "Serenity to accept the things I can't change, courage to change the things I can, wisdom to blah blah blah" quote. They're both steady, quiet about their own issues, and don't trust anyone to do anything without them - yet, both fear their other habits, to the point of defining themselves by the exclusion for as long as possible. The consistant throughline is someone sure of themselves while always being *twitchy* in regards to the outside world; Heirs commit to "fixing" everything, Mages shut themselves away, and these exaggerated self-perceptions hamstring *both* of their inevitable snaps into one another. Sure, fix everyone else's problems, but a docile presentation masks that Heirs are not always unable to fix their own issues: they may be *unwilling*, acknowledging that as infrequently as possible. For the intentionally alienated Mage, trying to become invested in other people's problems always threatens to disturb their existing conclusions - "subtle guidance" often misfires as "bare minimum of appeasement". Crisis and stress results in Heirs snapping into Mage isolation without a road back, or Mages snapping into action and making it worse from a precedent of (or continuing) disinterest in negotiation or basic empathy. Neither sees alternatives: the personal prophet and the Chosen One have only ever seen one route for themselves, but there was always middle ground between saving or ignoring everyone around them.

Blood Mage and Light Mage - John knows friendship (and the mess of ancestry his dad goes on about), Equius knows his culture (and their ridiculous myths), and both put up a decent fight before...well, I guess it didn't really go great for either of them, especially if we're counting epilogues. Beyond that, Meulin's an awful Heir of Mind, but being awful at it only highlights she is one, at least partially. If we're trusting Hussie that all the dancestors were based on fanon misrepresentation, then people underplaying Sollux's preference for isolation just might mean something; if Hussie isn't hiding anything, maybe moreso.

My brother is, still, an Heir of Breath. He also claims to know our father more than most. I still dispute that, and think it's a somewhat pressing situation to address. I wonder if we'll ever see eye to eye.

To **know** yourself as something static and true, while trying to **change** the lives of those around you with a gentle touch is, all in all, a pretty great combination of traits...which makes it a tragedy that it's snapped in two like a wishbone. Mages and Heirs suffocate a side of themselves, and miss the nuance of their opposed Aspect in the process - but not for lack of trying. A misfiring Heir impulse is *just enough* to get people to leave a Mage alone most days, and malleable enough to do whatever they need it to do on the days they feel like getting involved - all essentially selfish. What's more interesting is that a True Heir's single-mindedness and sturdy resolve is almost entirely the result of being built of Mage components...but that's a monkey paw situation if there ever was one. Where a True Mage sees imperfections as part of the greater whole, an Heir's Mage impulse sees a world of imperfections they lack the language to accept - which only further explains why a Mage's Heir-ish involvements are so often unapologetic, on top of the previously discussed self-imposed hinderences. They're both really good at each other's job on the days they don't misread the instruction manual - yet, more than efficiency, they're denying half their available methods to just feel *okay* with the world.

See it was SpaceWitch talking about her brother (a Derse Heir, with both of them raised by a Derse Lord), drawing a conclusion between Heirs and Lords that made me send her my constructed MSpaint chart - and that's what got her so excited she designed the globe model. So then, the idea that Heirs and Lords are the truest opposite? There's merit. Those moments of individuality have such weight (and sometimes violence) where you can see a similarity of approach, the same way Lords underestimate the weight of their mentoring. I'd argue this is more of a pent-up misfire, but maybe there is something worth examining on their relationship...hell, John and Caliborn are the closest Homestuck has to a "true good guy" and "true bad guy". There's a narrative there if you want, no matter how you slice it; the true King with magic they doubt or downplay, and the rich tyrant with a musical magic seen as a dubious excuse.

As for Mages? Like I've said, they have a tendency to get pretty..."excited", sometimes, tripping into a social fervor they usually don't humor. I've seen it enough in real life that it makes Meulin's attitude worth keeping in mind...and, kind of funny, given the name I picked for that post-Bard Class. We'll get there when we get there, but it's just nice how things work out sometimes.

If you wait long enough, an Heir will understand their Mage side - they just tend to forget how to be an Heir when they do. If you wait a lifetime, there is still no guarantee a Mage will change their strategies, or not feel uncomfortable playing emotional anchor. These are, plainly put, unnecessary limitations placed upon oneself, strangled by comfortable tragedies over unfamiliar hope. Life's more complicated than being "everything to everyone" or "fine" forever, but acknowledging that makes it easier. You don't have to sacrifice or succumb to anything; an Heir is *less* of a hypocrite for taking some of their own advice every now and again, and a Mage's conclusions become sharper when field-tested. It's going to be hard to unlearn some habits, and harder still to challenge personal narratives, but that doesn't mean anything drastic or sudden - just have an open mind. Be there for other people, but take solace in your own soul when you know it's better to be patient. Be open with your conclusions, allow them to be challenged, and remember whatever calling you're feeling is something you

wanted to do on some level. Rejecting it is an option, but that's an internal dialogue; your perception of the outside world and personal responsibilities shouldn't be confused with what's actually happening. You're always where you feel you have to be, but there's power in setting your own terms - we make our own fate.

Heirs are endearing little bundles of self-hatred, and I still hope I can help them finally give a seal of approval to their friends and themselves - to not run as soon as they're not needed, to not plant seeds of doubt so they always are. You can sit on that throne and be a King with the power of prophecy, even reform the monarchy to a democratic parliament...but just as many Heirs are gonna go find a different kingdom to save, or go back to the farmhouse they started in. Maybe more. Maybe all. Even with Mages, it's not like understanding an Heir impulse automatically makes them one; you could go with "Arch-Mage" or "Wizard" for some authority, but the door's open for things as simple as "Alchemist" or "Wanderer". There's alot of potential new Class names and interpretations - but here, if nowhere else, it depends on the individual wants from their own life. I just have my own longings, watching them work magic and hating to see them go. I can rationalize it this way and that, try to come to terms over it, but maybe I'm just clingy.

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WITCHES AND SEERS draw a clean line between personal eccentricity and collected observation - a line that is still crossed from time to time, despite all the conniptions regarding its importance. As it turns out, "doing a little for myself" and "neutrally observing the world" have such low upkeep it's easy avoid internal schisms as much as external, and neither Class is going to be in a huge hurry to fight for the spotlight - or fight for anything, when they can wait, manipulate, or settle. They chase and present contentment, but they can't cheerfully stay two steps ahead of depression forever; they *can* minimize fallout exceptionally well, but let's start this discussion with the pretext that hiding your pain is a failstate. Other people are reliable to hold on to, and one can always drudge up some personal fixes, but this is something they likely already know and practice; helping them cope more efficiently is on the table, but arguing they're more important than they think they are feels more pressing. They both tend to dance around insecurities, and see presenting otherwise as a conscious falsehood...but this idea that somewhere, deep down, they're "no good" is an unconscious falsehood. Even if you fit both pieces together, they might still see themselves as broken with no way to smooth out those edges, but you know what? Good. Maybe being prickly is form and not fragmentation; helps you catch the light better to shine, and helps stab a few people who have it coming too.

What? We going to pretend for a second that Terezi and Rose don't match to "Witch of Heart" and "Witch of Void" flawlessly? It's easy as soon as you realize you were allowed to look for it, just as much as Feferi and Jade make compelling Seers of Doom and Time respectively. I've known WAY too many in real life to not have this scent down like a bloodhound, and I hope I can make a compelling enough case that you see it too.

And let's not pretend Kankri didn't have sass.

To **change** what concerns you, and to **know** the world around you; the interplay is obvious, but the result is still a perception of being untethered,

if not outright “lesser”. An unknowable loose element in a sea of quantifiable figures - static, understandable, organized, Attuned. Seers often plunge head first, but Witches tread water in interesting ways. A misfiring Seer impulse will manifest in dependencies to louder voices and colour their Witch-Spiral-Speech^(tm) (which, honestly, always was just snapping into an angry Seer) but it also results in mistrusting their own praise and understandings. Witches can make beautiful speeches towards the great impartiality of the universe that comfort and enlighten, but they were rarely *trying* to. This leads to downplaying whatever they said in the past despite its lingering good, and rarely speaking up if they consciously recognize the stakes - call it stagefright, call it unworthiness, it's still unnecessary. For Seers, a misfiring Witch impulse is usually for screwing with people, and the precise way that they're able to influence them into favourable (or just interesting) positions. While this can be altruistic (despite firm - even exclusive - control), it is a misfire by virtue of how *horribly* Seers practice self-care. True Witches may also not solve longstanding problems or accept outside help, but they do cope more efficiently; as previously mentioned, Seers are really good at hiding the fact they're running their life off a cliff from the people who would object to that. They're outsiders who try to stay outsiders, accomplishing little more than the Witches who feel like outsiders no matter where they go.

“You must really hate me, huh?”, they say, always, eventually, vocalizing the assumptions they nurse. Do they want an answer? A retort? Of course their friends love them, of course they'd *fight* for them, but that answer is hard to trust. Seers try to logic their helplessness, Witches romanticize their helplessness...both tend to wind up with people who *keep* them helpless. If you reach out to pick them up, they can always push back.

This? This here? This text? This is the nuclear approach of someone who's sick of watching it happen. Sure it's still their decision, but it's a purposefully misinformed decision, and they both know that - if they didn't, they wouldn't be so surgical in arguing against it. If you lose the academia *and* the romance, it's harder to justify the death-flag they keep putting on their head, and the company they keep. Not impossible. I can't stop them. But either know better, or lie better, because it hurts to watch.

The pain is slight, but consistent - familiarity lulls one into a false sense of security. Self-loathing to smile through, at the risk of tainting the idea of smiles - or you tough it out, and set your terms for who you've got a problem with. A Passive impulse to be someone's side character, an Active impulse to live a separate story; Seers treat their place in the world as utility, where Witches treat moments of splendor they have no instinct to explain to anyone as some justification they shouldn't reach further. Both Aspects end up underplayed, but are we to assume low upkeep means low quality? Fuck that - a few bad spots and stutters don't change either Class being unforgettable, with sharp wits that can be forgiven for misjudging their own self-worth. A framework of the world is always fuzzy, but Witches turn their eyes from it where Seers try to see a whole that never comes into focus - it's *supposed* to be fuzzy, so those twitchy hands can get experimenting. If you're worried about hurting people, don't; if you think you're insignificant, know better; if you've got something you find beautiful,

share it, because it doesn't change that it always belonged to you. Don't ever feel like you don't belong just because you're lucid; the world is yours to upset or improve, paired with enough explanation to guide your hands and enthrall those involved. You're exactly who you're supposed to be, and you know exactly where you want to be - so do it, cause you never needed me or anyone else to tell you.

I have a soft spot for both Classes - endearing, trustworthy, and low(ish) fallout even when they abuse that trust. It's a hurt I can live with. Some people will have been hurt worse, and others might preach them even more favor. You make your own conclusions; my job (as I define it) is to help identify them first and foremost. They're always interesting company, if nothing else.

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INVERSION TIER 2: BONDS AND LIBERATION

(SET YOUR LIMITS, THEN CROSS THEM)

Needless suffering is not hidden in regards to the Class Pairs discussed here. Struggling to follow or break every rule is, in fact, emotionally and physically draining. Whether Servant or Outlaw, there is a self perception of being expendable pawns or off the board, not here for accolades or authority. Of course we are in control of our own brain delusions, and it's important to take ownership of that, but it does mean that finding themselves isn't going to *abandon* their complexes. There's limitations in sticking to procedure, just as many in subverting it, and every Class here *knows* that by virtue of constantly waxing wistful for a life they've artificially deemed off limits.

Guard what needs you, and **steal** what you need.

PAGES AND ROGUES are an (initially) unsustainable union of impossible personal standards and fragile alternatives that barely belong to them. Both sides tend to cancel themselves out if one is favoured without the other, and they spiral out of control on the occasions they don't. A Page impulse is basically non-functional out of the box, and can only be entertained in fantasy and harmless imitation; for True Pages, this is the starting point while trying to attain practical application, while Rogues have their aforementioned difficulty ascertaining their sense of self due to atrophy. Without confidence, Rogues muster their Aspect only as excuses and isolation...which is the *exact same rut* Pages perform at their lowest. It cuts worse, since the inverted Aspect is a failure state, with Pages retreating down every road they labelled "cowardice". Even Pages *offering* reprieve through the Rogue playbook is still easily regarded as "appeasement" or "coddling" - and what does that say about Rogues? To have the "impossible standard of who you're supposed to be" read as a threat? They're an outlaw running from themselves, trying to save others from the pressure *they* put themselves under, while broken Pages too often end up gloomier diet-

Rogues from the same ordeal. The searchlight and the spotlight are one in the same, but regardless of how much or little an individual decides to stand under it, it *belongs* to them first and foremost.

Of all the digressions I have with Hussie's officially listed Classes, claiming Pages as an Active Class is the *second* most controversial move I've ever made. Even Inversion theory itself takes the bronze.

I still hold that Homestuck proper, for whatever reason it may be, lines up well with this. Even if we don't take "Rufioh is a Rogue because that's the closest thing to a Passive Page" as an unsaid snark, Rufioh's own characterization lands, especially in relation to his relative. Tavros overthinks breaking free to live his life, freely gifting his suffering to those who don't deserve it. At his best, grown from experience, his Breath-y pluck is to lead by example, and the Rogue-iest he gets is easing others concerns enough that they might follow.

Rufioh, meanwhile, *seems to have trouble with commitment*; heavy oaths of it that he understands the weight of, both societal and his own monogamy. Blood is something he knows he's supposed to live up to, but everything Breath-y out of his mouth is a counter-argument. Tavros's grand calls to action are always about going forward, but Rufioh's forward momentum is only ever in *protest* to those grand calls. An outlaw, an outcast, a charismatic Rogue of Breath who can't escape that he's an awful Page of Blood. Doesn't hurt to have Horuss right there for comparison, in all the self-loathing he says a tad louder.

I like to think I don't need to be too thorough in how Nepeta's displays the diligence and conviction of a Page of Mind - her own personal pride in calculating these relationships -, or how Jake and Xefros both reflect the approaches of trying to balance Hope and Rage from different sides. You can't *write* a Page without writing a Rogue with it - and it's not much different when you're living as one.

Personal convictions rigidly **guarded**, and another to **steal** until everyone's happy - maybe even themselves. Take a step back, and it's almost *too* simple how these two fit together. The Passive impulse allows Pages to meet people halfway with negotiations for their craziest ideas, where the Active impulse gives Rogues a method and backbone to their most divisive disagreements or bohemian desires, and either Class can alternate as it suits them...at an end point, anyways. Pages are crippled by their primary impulse, but compromising for someone else's benefit comes *much* easier than actually going easy on themselves. All this guilt around breaks and shortcuts, not realizing their fixation towards them is a damn survival mechanism. Page beliefs need not just time, but some degree of rest and compromise. Hell, one of their most quintessential characteristics is a Rogue touch: **stealing solutions** by absorbing quotes, morals, gimmicks, and everything else from the world around them. Pages reinforce their personal identity out of what they can do for people around them, but they can still twist this into meeting people halfway while only ever dragging them to their side - to manipulate and subvert with the Inverse, only accepting control. Still, if you let everyone else have their way every time, then too many voices corrupt and dismantle certainties, and violate one's self worth. Rogues have so many of the same problems, without often realizing they *had* personal certainties in the first place - but they do. They always did. All that guilt of not having more to offer is equally potential to do just that. If they're going to stand up for others, they need to stand up *to* others - and that starts with themselves. Starts by setting down some

ground rules, and finding what's worth sticking to. More than demonizing their opposed Aspect, they can do it correctly.

I've seen some people act like all I'm doing is throwing some hissy fit, because Pages are stuck being some 'Sissy Weakling Passive Class', and not a 'Chad Thundercock Active Class'. I choose to acknowledge that these people exist, but politely refuse to engage with everything so dishonest in that debate. Yes, I have skin in the game in this...but, so do plenty of people. Pages of any age or place on earth. And no matter everything that separates us, talents and fascinations and taste in music we don't share, there is still that throughline that connects us - and Rogues too, cut from the same cloth. I remember all the tender conversations I've had with Rogues; as much humbled seeing a mirror of me with such uncomplicated selflessness, as annoyed seeing such a committed coward. But there's nothing that makes my side of the coin more noble, and I'd be an idiot if I didn't try to understand things as they do.

If I can say anything? If I can say what I wish people said to me - what some people *did* say to me, but I was too scared to believe it? Be the person you want to be. Say those stupid catchphrases, wear that dumb hat, and stop looking so hard for someone else to do it for you. Your idols can be smart, strong, even heroic, but never like how YOU want them to be - how YOU want yourself to be. Be brave, be kind, and don't listen to anyone on the internet who says "Actually, the destiny of a Page is to stop believing in yourself and be a better footstool for other people." And *definitely* don't listen to anyone who says that same sentiment without the excuse of thoughtlessly parroting Homestuck fanon - or, worryingly, canon. Nothing can kill your spirit, but believing you shouldn't have it will cost you years you'll never get back.

They both *want* to help people, but it is in questioning themselves that the other side never makes it too far; ignored obligations, ignored alternatives, two impulses that blame the other fighting for the position of superego, corroded by caveats they won't admit exist for a *reason*. Even in hypothetical isolation, the Page impulse doesn't have enough juice to justify totality; suffocating doubts creep in through their hesitation, telling them they're wasting themselves on childish futility...and in there is still the only kindness that can ease the weight of the world off their shoulders. Rogues all have conniptions of some selfishness they can't remove from themselves, of the sin they can't make up for, but that was always the stubborn lurch of the Page voice that won't die - that standing up for an idea, standing up for *themselves*, isn't as complicated as they want it to be. Concession doesn't always mean corruption, and neither is a failure for being unable to maintain bravado or compassion permanently; sometimes, there's simply no motivation for theatre, and no sympathy left for those who don't deserve a second chance. Be kind to yourself, and don't let yourself be taken advantage of: you're not lesser, you're not a failure, you're not a stressball. The fact you can function without needing to prove that to everyone is just a reminder you only ever needed to prove it to yourself. You can shine like a damn diamond if you want, be your best self even on off days, talk back to your friends if you think they're selling themselves short...or walk away from it all, refusing to carry everybody to the finish line, and free of the guilt that you were ever supposed to. You can be a hero, a friend, a stranger; whatever you can think of, however far it goes, whenever you think is fair. Just remember to follow your own advice - you made it for yourself first, after all.

I've been forthcoming with a lot of personal details about myself. I don't disguise my biases, but still imitate some ideal of professionalism in a cheap parlour trick of multiple fonts. I'm trying to aim my sincerity in a way that accentuates the points I'm making. I play with my cards

face up. I hope anyone reading this sees where I'm coming from, and recognize the mechanisms from other people's words that are less explicit. We're all meat in the end - but we're a dreaming meat, at least. I think some of that is true, as much as I recognize it pertains to my own specific obsessions.

I'm a headcase. I've got plenty wrong with me. I suppose it's all those personality disorders that nudged me to treat Classpects as little different...but, it's been working out so far. I like to think I'm not terrible at meeting people halfway; I like to think my most needless insults and petty asides don't entirely undo the good I'm trying to accomplish.

I hope you feel seen, in all this. I hope I've done that. I hope you feel acceptance and validation towards all that you are. Recognize the folly in trying to trim and censor yourself, trying to get people to like you - maybe past the point you even noticed you were doing that. I hope these words and labels are taken as a bridge to something true inside yourself, that belongs to no one else; that you don't kill your dragons, but tame them. I've got my pride in getting all the facts of this baloney-psychology in order, but *that* I can do alone. Spreading it elsewhere, all I want to make sure is that it does some damn good. If you think I have, I don't need any praise for it; it's the half of me that doesn't want any.

I don't know about everyone, but rather than get weighed down by nobility, I like the individualism of "adventurer" or "explorer". "Champion" if I'm feeling presumptuous - and I'll decide for myself if it is or not. That goes the same for anyone reading this.

I swear Tavros is the only one who actually made it.

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THIEVES AND KNIGHTS have diametrically opposed self-perceptions, to the point of making the comparison *more* obvious. Thieves are always trying to prove themselves against the establishment (that they project), and Knights are always trying to enforce a system that never benefits (or includes) themselves. Both are *terrified* of submitting to the other impulse, both *inevitably* will at various points of their lives, and they seem to think that there's no going back once they do. These impulses result in the same worldview no matter what's at the forefront at any given time: they're an immutably bad person, they do evil because of that, they do good to make up for that, nothing ever fills the hole inside, nothing about their relationship to the world can be changed, Prospits try to settle with it, Dersites laugh about it, pain begets pain. Look, if you think your entire life, for decades spent and decades to come, boils down to "surpress all emotion and be human footstool" or "hurt everyone and everything around me in wild aggression", then you're *fucked* both ways because **the other voice never goes away, and wasn't the problem in the first place**. No one is making you do anything (usually), and this mythmaking surrounding a need for penance and a need for protest only strangles ones ability to parse reality. They are the Scorpion and the Frog both - which is to say they are neither, and pretending otherwise is what keeps eating them alive.

Hey, remember when Vriska burnt out and had depressed consolation flirts with Meenah who was also rather burnt out? Great. Good talk. Place that mentally next to Dave Strider's mental breakdown, and Karkat's for flavour. We all on the same page?

Steal an Aspect to rewrite it in your favour, and **guard** others with the one you can't dent (or like, you know, "shouldn't") - easy on their own, but tricky to synergize. Thieves and Knights may have their hard snaps when they're

utterly sick of themselves, but their twin impulses manifest and misfire constantly no matter what they do. Redoubling the earlier discussed dynamic with Witches/Seers, seeing others as “more stable/cohesive”, it makes sense why Thieves latch on to others as readily as they’re threatened by them; their personal worth is easily substituted by connection, both in more explicitly Knight-y brotherhood and threadbare (yet possessive) connections to famous or fictional figures. Course, if they’re putting all their eggs in their primary Aspect, then the opposed one only manifests as enforcing a negative in others: the same reflex Knights have to put people on a pedestal is misfired to shove them into the ground, *and* to reinforce bonds so they won’t leave. To keep any company whatsoever, Thieves make themselves useful in a way that must be unique, and Knights are no different: their opposed Aspect is often something **stolen** for exclusive control, as a talent they’ve “got covered” so you don’t have to. Knights fret constantly about personal delights, but they already *do* that by rewriting it as one more “responsibility” they’re incredibly defensive to give up. These are some wild mental gymnastics around a pretty basic mechanism: help your friends as a specific service, and do what you want if you don’t think it’s a good idea at the time. All this “I am garbage” or “I have to fight everyone who believes I’m garbage” thought is, fundamentally, optional. All Classpect beliefs are fake, but these two really are making things needlessly difficult for themselves - and *even this process of self-hatred* is too easily defended as part of the personal identity they’ll fight for.

Karkat’s raw thirst for leadership (and John) isn’t a distraction, it’s a function. In the same way, Dave’s organized self-hatred (and webcomic) reflect a very unique approach to the Space Aspect; he’s not rejecting creativity and choice, he’s making his own. In regards to his “I’m not a hero” speech, it’s a detached zen he’s using to martyr himself with, and that is...so, so tragically true to life. Thieves and Knights both wear their abuses with them, but there’s something so mournful about how Knights try to re-engineer the hostility that made them.

Somehow, it’s the Thief in my life who wound up the most well-adjusted, and remains one of my closer friends - and they’re lightbound, the filthy Vriska-kin.

Thieves care about their friends, and balancing that with their hell-raising is uneasy; they’ll burn out, and reigniting that raw passion to face the world and chase their dreams is tricky. The more Knights rely on their immutable worldview, the more fragile it will become to a world that does not give a shit; when it shatters, they crash and burn into a faux-Thiefhood of ugly spite where they try to make everyone hate them as much as they hate themselves. Somewhere, between these two impulses, and inside the individuals that live with them, is the moderation to balance them out - to not pick either narrative of the sinner or slave, but dissolve them to their base elements and alchemize anew. The fact is, Knights are allowed a break - they’re also allowed to be annoying, unhelpful, selfish, and probably *should* without trying to “make it useful” or “stuff it down”. Thieves don’t need to pretend to be any worse than they are; they’re wounded, they know that, but romanticizing it doesn’t heal it and neither does hurting friends. You’re not an everlasting protector of the innocent or a remorseless killer;

you can bluff it, get shit done, but you have to know it's fake first and foremost. Contemplate who you are past your best *and* worst qualities - what you actually want, who you've actually got a problem with, and what you really want to be remembered for. Maybe it's best to take a break from defining yourself as a Thief or Knight...at least, not until you've decided what you want to define it - and yourself - as.

Like I said, "Mercenary" is a fun combo, but...yeah. There's human lives in the mix - and pretty volatile ones. Feels like pre-retcon Vriska is the only one who really figured it out...but maybe I should show more sympathy to Dave. Always rubbed me the wrong way how he pretty much "retired" timehood. It works for him. I wanna say I'd be more ambitious. But when I played Oxenfree, I just hugged the guy goodbye at the end. I guess I was always going to.

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INVERSION TIER 3: MIRACLES AND SCIENCE (THE GRAY BETWEEN GIVING IN AND GIVING UP)

Aspects are beliefs, and most of those are synonymous with "things that make us happy". The Royals touch of destruction should ideally temper, the

Fae most of all, but the difficulties are well documented. Despite this defined skepticism, they're not actually as practical as they think (which is probably pretty obvious to the people around them). The damaged scraps of their main Aspect only highlight what fills the null space; an inverted Aspect they believe in *too* much, and an inverted Class that keeps them ready for action (if not, strictly speaking, stable). Princes don't have to be misreable and Bards don't have to be...Bards, but it means walking back on everything (or at least half of everything) they think they are. It's equally unfamiliar for the Fae, but they really do have more in common than they think, and there's possibility past the insult.

All is equal; nothing can be **created** without being **destroyed**, and vice versa.

MAIDS AND BARDS are, somehow, staggeringly, the same Class. While their reputations can seem irreconcilable, and it remains one of the most truly *segmented* Inversions, the twin impulses are always present - just, you know, not really "balanced". The Maid impulse is a wellspring of self-assurance and self-sufficiency, and Bards can sit comfortably (probably too comfortably) on this background process while their actual primary Aspect fails to get off the ground. Of course, Bards do have that aforementioned super-dedicated niche of willpower and followthrough - it's just not their main interest, compared to these unsubstantiated hypotheticals and tangents. Maids do this too, but it's harder to recognize from all that impulsive spirit barreling them forward; moments of wild wonder and slippery fascinations, glimpsing something past preconceptions, all before

sliding back into rigid routines. They're both too comfortable with who they are, where a Bard's Active side rarely strays past it's essentials as a personal motive, and a Maid's Passive side rarely evolves into anything besides "aimless and unproductive heckling". Still, no matter how opposed, is this any different than Pages and Rogues? It's easy to let people off the hook, but harder to do it for yourself; easy to see how things could be better, but harder to get loud and force it to happen. We are playing with much higher stakes of course, but Maids will work themselves to death if they don't find *substance* in the world outside...and, you know, Bards could stand to put their productivity on offer, instead of always stargazing.

Gamzee being a Maid of Hope really tracks, even at his most wrathful moments; Destroyers overall better display their inverted Aspect, like I've been saying. For Maids, I have the benefit of knowing one (for sure, anyways, but I do have guesses on an aunt of mine). Maid of Light, but you bet your ass she has some *weird* guesses sometimes. Sometimes that's making narratives where there are none, and sometimes it's openly fucking around with the unknown without any pretenses - there's a Bard in there, and they do synergize decently well. You want anything more, go watch Peridot's arc from Steven Universe (my money's on Mind/Heart).

Creating instances of your Aspect is hard to do without **destroying** the other one you see out there, using the Maid impulse as a monster truck engine and the Bard impulse as a battering ram. Now obviously this is a pretty friggin' well oiled machine for Maids, but we're defining misfire by needless failure states and fighting a perfectly good Aspect...which Maids do *alot*. Again, Maids do have a vague outline of what the world is outside their obligations, and who they could be in it, but it's not so much slowing down so much as charging full speed in the opposite direction; a Bard's touch in confusion, questions, juggling and discarding what they're having so much trouble trying to grasp. It's fascinating to tear into something and find it's true essence, but it's simpler to just **destroy** it indiscriminately - and far, far too often, Bards don't do much different. Again, it's pretty rare they step up to plate and truly invoke their primary Aspect, rather than cheerfully disregard anything not up to their standard. A misfiring Maid impulse really shows the worst side of it; pulling excuses and reassurances out of one's ass, with no practical altruism. Without the necessity of putting their self-worth in it, Bards **create** their own echo chamber, too easily shielding them from criticism and accountability...and maybe, if we don't show respect and sympathy to the toil of Maids, we can acknowledge they often wind up doing the same thing.

Bard of Mind, one of my oldest friends, always goes "but do you know the REAL me, beyond the LAYERS" kind of talk whenever I try to press him, especially on Classpects. At least now I know where it's coming from, and he's finally made some progress at appreciating other people's emotions rather than (only) doubting everyone's strategies.

You know, Bards are the double-inverse of a Page. Maybe that's why I'm so irked by them.

Neither Class here is in a hurry to change, where figuring themselves out is always a personal quest - one that, hypocritically, stands next to disinterestedly making quick assumptions of those around them. Ironically, invoking the Passive side is one of the best ways for Maids to tend to their

mental health, finding purpose in doing very little. Also ironically, a Bard's Active side is an excellent way to assist those around them, so long as they're willing to stop patting themselves on the back and actually fulfill a request thrown their way. There is a balance between aggressively doing everything and aggressively doing nothing, but neither Class is likely to find it unless something truly breaks their stride; no matter what endless reserves they can pull personally, it doesn't *help* anyone if they don't *listen* to anyone. Independence and self-sufficiency is a great attribute, but solipsism is dangerous in a way that's too easily seductive. Even if the differing approaches to the Aspects don't line up equally, it's still important to mix and reconcile them as much as possible; the Bard impulse is *designed* to blend and remix the ideas of others, not just fry them into cinders while obviously not giving a shit what anyone says (even though it can (and does (alot))). While neither Class creates any kind of natural team-player, there's no inherent nobility to what comes natural in the first place - and a Bard can see that as easily as a Maid could make a counter-example. Maids frequently clean up everyone else's messes without addressing the root, whereas Bards fixate on it (or are at least trying to) without putting their money where their mouth is. Maids and Bards are both terribly difficult to wrangle away from following their path at their own pace...but, at least to their own stories and self-reflection, maybe that's for the best. What matters is taking a chance on routes long since ruled out and laughed away.

I'm not sure what kind of title you could use specifically, but there's certainly an allure to "Trickster spirit meddling with mortals", and the inhuman arcane nature of clowns. Maybe just "Trickster"? I know it's a loaded term in Homestuck's lexicon, but we can afford a few deviations. Ugh, pick whatever name you want - and that goes for friends of Maids and Bards moreso, since they're more likely to read this.

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PRINCES AND SYLPHS actually make significantly more sense than the previously discussed link, both initially and in depth. Poor with boundries, very defensive, weird assumption of being "in charge" of everyone else, needlessly competitive and petty, most critical in areas they're nervous to risk attempting, tendency to track people down days after an argument to get the last word in...it's pretty much the exact same laundry list of bad habits. Sure, their attitudes and focus are in different areas, but the fragile idealism and fragile cynicism aren't as different as they think (the keyword is fragile). It's hard to be everyone's best friend when you overthink it as "a job", and worse when that "job" is the only distraction from a volitile ennui at who the hell you're supposed to be and where you fit into the world. Sylphs at least have a "functional" default, where their Active side can be ignored as much as possible and misfires can be minimized...but Princes are who they are, warts and all, precisely for having all that darkness at the forefront. In fact, Princes invert more explicitly than most, invoking their opposed Classpect more than their primary one, struggling to make *either*

work. There's a lot to get into here, and it's for people who take a lot of pride in having their shit sorted all by themselves without any help...but if it can be knocked over by anything, is it worth protecting? You want to help everyone, but you don't know how to help yourself, and it's scary when it feels like someone is trying to take control of your last scrap of self. Look, it's not impossible to synergize the two sides, but they need to be untangled from the psychological rat's nest of paranoid power-keg. If that hurts to hear, stop making it true.

Eridan and Dirk having a Rage and Mind side should be no surprise given their words and actions. Aranea's relationship with irrelevancy is under her strict jurisdiction; when new information threatened it, she could no longer allow it. Much the same with Kanaya, who, besides some particular ideas of "what's gotta happen", rather famously defied death as a vampire. It's Aradia who gave herself more time in the hourglass, more of a rush of being alive - it's Kanaya who broke the hourglass, rejecting its sanctity and meaning.

The less I say about my mother the better. I will say, at least, that Sylphs and Princes are the loudest theists or atheists. The absolute loudest.

To "**destroy** an Aspect" is a phrase that makes sense, but still misses the subtleties; you're stuck attacking it because it isn't what you want it to be, and you can't truly annihilate it either. You *want* to chisel it into something great, but perfectionism too easily smashes it to rubble...it just doesn't actually kill it. So what then of **creating** the opposed one, in a Passive way meant for everyone? A responsibility, altruistic and unquestioned? See this is easy to understand with Sylphs: **create** a road for everyone else, while showing a personal **destructive** disgust at what stands in its way. Their pride is in the sadistic stranglehold, but they rarely consciously realize that the wreckage left over is *precisely* organized the way they want it to be; their callous off-hand remarks, snide pride, all of it identical to True Princes. On the other hand, Princes are playing a truly miserable game of telephone trying to interpret these impulses: their "responsibility to others" is...the strangled scraps of their primary Aspect? Is the corruption and dysfunction they see in others a **creation** of naturally plotting a course for everyone else, trying to intervene to an invented evil? If they pull the "happiness is impossible, we must all accept the failure and helplessness that surrounds us" speech, is that just them barely starting to see good in their opposed Aspect, but projecting it as universal? Why is even self-destruction meant to be some "way it has to be"? It feels like every Prince reinvention is just a reshuffling of win-states and fail-states, where every misfire is recognized enough to scare them into doing something reckless...but no matter how many times they reshuffle, it's the same fucking deck. They need to stop thinking no one can understand what they're going through, or that all that self-loathing is the core of their identity rather than the very predictable result of utterly failing to grasp it.

They're not monsters, but they'd prefer that, over being called a cliché. I don't know how they expect to move past that if they won't recognize the problems they can't romanticize. It gets gross. They're not some tragic byronic hero, they're just half nurturing caretaker and half easily disappointed. At least Sylphs accept the first one.

I keep thinking about the whole “I raised myself” Prince childhood. Cause again, Sylphs are...futzy, on details. It'd check out, but we're not even measuring trauma so much as a child's rationalizations to it. Would Kanaya have been an outright Prince of Time with a Y chromosome (or whatever troll equivalent)? Is the pressure of serving her caste and being unable to do anything about it something quintessential to her becoming a Sylph of Space? Hussie decides that, but they've been right about enough things to make me worry about the people in my life, and what made them.

It's not *new* for Princes to wield their opposed Aspect, but it's too often manipulative; bait, lies, invented evils, invented shelter, whatever accomplishes the task of making people rely on them and submit to their cataclysmic worldview. It's completely foreign for Sylphs to acknowledge their opposed Aspect as something to build up, as something unifying instead of justifying their control. The Prince impulse is dangerous, yes, but it has far more utility than needlessly chasing moral oblivion and settling for abusive hypocrisy - it was *never* about what is destroyed, but what is spared. The undeniable truths, the beauty beneath the rot, the thing that never needed “fixing” in the first place - you know, your fucking self-identity. Sure it's fragile, but letting it breathe grows it into inner strength; if you hide it, try to feed its sickness with external validation, it just withers and poisons all your kindness. So often, the two Classes devolve into a broken narcissist, obsessed with proving an infantile image of superiority. Denying this fearful insignificance only internalizes (and displays) it further, while you try to prove that your “individual special opinions” are the “objective correct way to living”. Here's a fun tip: good and evil aren't real, we made them up. There is no correct way to live, but yours never had to be. You can sustain healthy relationships without either of you being dependent. You're not allowed to *decide* you didn't hurt someone; some people are unreasonable, but if that's 99% of the people you meet **that is a red flag and you should reconsider why “you” are the only “sane” person you know.** If you can't cleanly fall back on who you are, you only push forward into who you aren't, mythologizing the dichotomy into a matter of life and death for everyone around you - and it isn't. It's just you. But maybe the world will keep spinning regardless of you trying to push it or slow it down. Maybe that's okay.

Foreign fairy representative and Princes both fit well into the “could totally pull a coup”. Originally I had fancy poetry speeches for here too, but I thought against it. Still...Princes tapping into fairy magic, louder and dangerous in a way that competes with the controlled cantrips of Heirs; there's something to that, some resolution of the implied “arc” of the royal scientist trying to burn away the magical world out of fear. Just as well, give Sylphs cannons and militias, see if we can trust them, right? Maybe? Inversion is healthy, but it's not an obligation to loudly embrace it, I suppose. Besides, even if we ignore what will or won't go over well, it's just plain easier to say what can't work compared to what might. There's a lesson there, I'm sure, but I'm no Prince. I exploit destruction, and maybe my frustrated obsession is in trying to exploit the destroyers - there's always so much good buried there, but they'd all rather spiral.

The less I go into who's hurt me, the better - probably. If there are any Princes...just find a way forward. Not by burning the past, but by learning from it. It's work. You're going to fuck up and relapse. The trick isn't making sure it doesn't happen, the trick is being okay with getting back up.

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INVERSION TIER 4: HEAVEN AND EARTH (THE HARDEST BRIDGE TO BUILD)

I appreciate any skeptics who came this far, wondering what I'm up to - and who will have to wonder just a little longer. Call it thorough planning, or call it needless dramatics, but all the same: information was omitted, and will continue to be until we have addressed all prerequisite information. Where Tier 3 showed the imbalances present in high intensity Inversion, this is a step beyond. A Master's 100% certainty on the shape of contentment is only matched by a 100% certainty in the shape of discontent, and while that translates to an expectation of controlling both, it creates the *wildest* extremes of what someone is capable of...or at least, capable of *justifying*.

As exemplar and patriot, **command**; as invader and pariah, **conquer**.

A consistency among see-saw models is the idea that Lords and Muses balance themselves out. As a Paired Class, yes - as an Inversion, no. It's a damn shame Hussie didn't talk about any other Classes (explicitly), but 14 doesn't really balance out evenly, does it? Odd numbered 7, Lords and Muses standing alone, it should make you suspicious. Admittidly, I missed it. I just kept asking questions, and finally found someone that violated my assumptions while making everything else snap into place. Jesus I was in an insomniac fugue state for like 4 days writing that all down...anyways, we'll get to it. Despite being an information-focused document, a bit of narrative suspense helps build a more usable image, I believe.

I settled on "Conquer" eventually, but the earliest one I went with was "Corrupt". Too harsh there. "Falcify", still kinda. "Transform" for awhile, but it didn't communicate the hostility involved. Conquer works, even if it does invite the RTS jokes.

LORDS AND...well, what would you call it? A Lord's Passive side? Sure, they're self-obsessed by design, but there's something at play here: their mentoring instinct to set people straight, the dismissive skepticism, how they play aggressive with the Inverse, all feel *similar* to the Maid/Bard interplay. An Active impulse needs an equally strong Passive impulse to balance it out - keyword there being "impulse". Lords are more than their ego, more than the "idea" of themselves, or else they wouldn't be capable of the dangerous manipulations we've discussed before: silent, cold pragmatism, that has no voice or language. Lords are ***not*** brutally honest when it doesn't suit them, but the overwhelming presence of their primary impulse can disguise the existence of anything else they're plotting - even to themselves, as we've discussed with the hasty lies often employed. Where Mages have unexplained exceptions, Pages have shameful scheming, and Maids have unproductive heckling, Lords have manufactured misrealities - as soon as they learn to do it intentionally, they become some of the most dangerous liars on the fucking planet. This impacts how Lords interact with their opposed Aspect - which is to say, without sanctity, hesitation, or care for what was before. Not to **command** with genuine (albeit often selfish and masturbatory) belief, but absolute Adaptation, **conquered** in totality. Sure, Lords often try to reshape the world to revolve around them ("Buddy, the

REAL YOU would be doing what I like doing, so stop having an opinion”), but that’s still a misfire, ignoring this Passive impulse’s merit outside of revolving around the primary. There is potential here, but it should be obvious how difficult it is to hold Lords accountable to their actions. Still...it’s the only road for they themselves to escape their own orbit, even if it’s the same one to drag outsiders into it.

Caliborn. Space Aspect. Creativity. Come on, it works for Johnny Silverhand too - that man understood zen and meditation only as it pertained to violent punk rock rebellion, didn’t he? Yes it was a cheap excuse to hook followers and cause chaos, but there is a dynamic, and I’ve known enough real life Lords to say there’s truth to it. We always know what we fight against, don’t we?

MUSES...don’t seem to make much time for themselves, do they? Their mouth is for your voice, their soul is hollowed to make room for yours, etc etc. They build a frightening amount of their identity on who’s in their life, bordering on (and sometimes very much being) obsession. They are not prone to voice or condone what they get out of it, but it *does* seem just-maybe-suspiciously close to the inverted Aspect they’ve otherwise written off. A Prince impulse in a Sylph is diminished, but never dead; much like the associated Aspect, the sense of self cannot ever be completely **destroyed**, and thus the struggle rages eternal. Muses seem to have lost that fight and been snuffed out...or did they? A Muse’s sense of self appears **conquered** into a dormant submission - but, again, critically, even if the Muse hasn’t noticed, not dead. That voice of cold spite Muses break out is *definitely* coming from somewhere, but pinning down everything it is and wants is imperceptible, as off-limits to us as a Muse’s inverted Aspect is to them - but even then, there still are shades, both in outbursts and subtle assumptions. It is a Muse’s primary Passive Aspect that can so easily overwrite wills like a Lords, but it is doing so while advertising itself as impersonal, which Muses themselves (probably) believe; it is a Muse’s Active side, their inverted Aspect, that hides underneath these speeches. It is everything they will take for themselves, everything they stand to gain, in an Aspect they so often vilify - but should they? Shouldn’t there be some safe environment to let this out without hurting anyone? With how zealous and esoteric Muses are, it’s easy to assume they’re exaggerating why they must always be kept in line. In truth, even now, it feels fair to say *Muses* still aren’t as dangerous as they say. After all, that little voice isn’t in the driver’s seat...at least, for them.

That Muse of Heart I know always jokes about being “smooth-brained”. Maybe a coincidence. She draws some intricate predictions sometimes though - abandons them quickly, doesn’t look for a fight, but they’re not gone. Just as well, a Muse of Hope I knew (Chinese Christian would you believe it) had alot of seething fury - which, I’ve complained about, yes, but boy was she the rowdiest about it. Believe you me, Muses have bite.

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So what’s going on here? Aspects without belief, impulses without Classes, wants without frameworks? It’s very difficult to describe, and if we jump

into it now, it's very easy to get the wrong impression about all of this; if you don't see how it completes the system, you might think it jeopardizes it.

That if there's such a truly invisible Class that's difficult to detect or discern, that I'm just making shit up...or maybe, that if there is a Class so truly malleable, what if we all are? What if everything listed is just a fluctuation, and all I saved for last is a concession that none of this was true?

I'm still willing to bet I've got something.

This document will continue doing it's best to catalogue Classes, in all the chronic and immutable qualities that follow our paths in life, stuck to our shoe. Unpleasant as this all might be, it is not unsalvagable; that boxed in by a Classpect and its shadowed twin, there is still a world of differences in how we express ourselves, and the choices we make. Classes may be everpresent, but they are not all we are, and its understanding the mechanisms and intricacies that allows us to stretch the immutable as far as it goes. So, if we're going to sail into uncharted waters, let's double check that the boat is seaworthy.

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DISCREPANCIES

(CLOSE DOESN'T COUNT)

A Class is a default, a status quo, a habit. You whittle them down to its essence and it seems trivial, but a modest seed blossoms into an intricate flower - even if it is pretty damn similar to all the other flowers of its type. Course, there's still only so much you can sum up in a few paragraphs; we adapt to social contexts, we mature, and sometimes we just try really hard to be someone else. Even if the rubberband always snaps back eventually, it can still make it pretty far, and our Class impulses can be reinvented or reconciled in a way that makes us unfamiliar to others. For the outliers, for the deviations, for the circumstantial, for the not-yet-relapsed, let's have a lightning round with the usual suspects we've all grown to understand.

Originally I had Inversions after discrepancies, but this works better. It's best to get the static information out the gate first, THEN address variables.

Heirs and Pages both want to do good, be there for you, and apply themselves. They also both feel a compulsion to rise to challenges and high stakes, with strong opinions on "What I gotta do". The obvious difference is that Heirs are deft with details to the point of losing themselves in it, where Pages are so intimidated by the scope it's a cliché for them to run with their tail between their legs, begging anyone else to take their place. Obviously, it's not a rule, and working that Rogue impulse can help a Page try to put themselves in the same position as Heirs. Team centerpiece therapist/leader

or not, however, doesn't change the endgoal: Pages want to win, Heirs want to fight. While distant, impossible dreams may stay the same, Pages would very much like to be there, and will struggle to keep their spirits up if it feels like they're not making any progress. Heirs live for the process, and integrate other wills rather seamlessly; Pages can feel overwhelmed when they're directly identified as someone's anchor, preferring intervention on their own (brief) terms. They have a Passive side, but they're not a Passive Class, where compassion has to fit next to static ideas of principle, self-improvement, and showmanship. For Heirs, compassionate concern comes first, and they'll often exempt themselves from going down the road they keep encouraging to others - which is to say, as their chosen win-state, without the open fragility and meekness that defines Pages living by proxy. Besides, if Heirs had the selfish-streak of vanity that Pages did, they wouldn't be so hesitant to call themselves a monarch, would they? Their (quiet) pride is as the sheepdog - Pages want glitz, glam, glory, superpowers, the works. Trying to share that with others is mostly guilt, as is trying to "earn" to the right to such indulgences.

You know Raimi Spider-Man was a solid Page, but it feels like most iterations lean Heir.

Heirs and Knights are confused only in dry descriptions, and *never* when you put them in the same room together. While they both have bravado to act like everything's fine, it's serving very different purposes; Heirs challenge others, contest opinions, and drop the docile act when they need to get serious. Knights are not *docile*; serious, goofy, aggravating, but just about never the quietest voice in the room, and you don't have to dig too far to find a lot of loyalty to those close. If there are problems, it's because people need to be reminded who they are and have their will (real or imagined) enacted - not *doubted*, let alone course-corrected. It's why Knights are so prone to cracking when someone explicitly says they didn't ask for it - and on that note, it's pretty hard to confuse a Thief and a Mage. Broken Heirs will drift off, but they really don't burn bridges; they have moments of curt and direct confrontation, yes, but not twitchy verbal harassment with low blows and self-loathing.

This is very embarrassing to mention but, back during the early days of getting into this, I assumed my brother was a Knight, not an Heir. I mean sure, I had rougher descriptions, contradictory fan theories, limited friends I could poke, but...it nags at me. There's earlier versions of this document that get really emotional at the end of the Knight section - I mean it for him, full stop, said as much, and I feel so stupid I fucked it up. I've internalized this paranoia that I need to be perfect, or else I void my right to speak at all. I take some comfort in early guesses that were dead right, and it's not like any of this could have started as anything other than rougher guesses before I got sharper. Then again, maybe that's all just Page excuse making. I shouldn't have been hasty, where real people's heads are on the line. There's a potential to help as much as hurt with all this. It always feels like it never should have been me here, writing all this. I've got friends who agree with what I write, but I can't forget those concerned at what I'm doing. I have to try - I want to try. Someone should. But I also know why I believe that.

I did keep working on the Heirs section, and when I got it into a good state, I showed him. I mean LifeHeir seemed pleased enough, but my brother actually had a double-take - some acknowledgement of his secrets and conniptions, of faces he's played when I was never in the

room. Even now, I feel so...warm, and fuzzy and acknowledged for that. Still, it caught him off guard, and he's defaulted back to "concerned dismissal" ever since.

He's never going to read this.

Heirs and Mages are *usually* pretty easy to tell apart. The contrast between gentle "big brother" (gender optional), and emotionless nerd-hermit, is as disparate a gap as any Inversion. They *can* meet in the middle, however: unflinching and uncompromising personal principles that underpin conflict mediation and intervention. Of course, being willing to compromise only on *how* to tackle problems, but never one's authority to judge...well, there's enough to be said on the damage either side of the coin can do. This is genuinely a very difficult discrepancy, best sorted out from outside observation, by those who have had a lot of experience with clearer examples of Heirs and Mages beforehand. Asking directly might be difficult, as anyone in this middle-ground will have a zeal to their self-perception that can colour their observations; an honest answer, but not a correct one. The cleanest solution is to have known the person before they reached this chapter of their life, where they were almost certainly leaning further into their default Classpect, and may flicker back towards as time goes on. Otherwise, you're left with the delicate details of how *precisely* they rationalize their actions and justify their arguments: do they lead with Mage experience, or Heir authority? Is it a matter of those under custody to adhere to the bigshot's personal methodology on *principle*? Or is the watchful eye justified by a tangible tally of lives improved, however skewed? Even if neither of these two mind-facets surrender, one is still trusted to be more convincing - if not to those under their care, then at least the person saying it.

I think I've alluded to personal drama enough here to verify, but I won't dwell on the details. An applicable fiction would actually be Jin Sakai of "Ghost of Tsushima". It took me a minute, but he does come down to Heir, methinks. The entire game is built around his journey of compromising his samurai code further and further in the name of saving his people, but I find it interesting how he goes about it. There are such emotional gut punches of how much he feels he's violated all he stood for, but so much less as time goes on; that the spectre of his uncle's disappointment fades to "so long as he's not immediately looking", and escalates further in a story I greatly enjoyed. Honest to god, I wanna' say Heir of Void: the Equius redemption arc we never got.

Witches and Seers are an Inverse that so rarely forms anything quite so saturated. Sure, in a vacuum, Witches are the wild free spirit of innocent (and perhaps indecent) imagination, and Seers are the concerned lecturer of ascetic selflessness, but it's not *that* hard to be both. Witches will happily prop others up, regaling another's own life to them as a misunderstood hero. This "misunderstood" part seems pertinent from someone with complications surrounding the side of themselves that handles a greater understanding of the world, picking favourites with a Seer framework, but not dignifying it any further. Seers are not always so awkward, and with enough mirthful spirit, it's easy to see they only had one language to ever cut loose...even if there's still shame to it, as the first thing to be sacrificed when "shit needs doing". Ultimately, as an outsider, there is simply too

much gray area to find anything resembling a smoking gun...but, they're both pretty approachable, and liable to entertain talks of internet personality systems, so why not ask them directly? Ultimately, both Classes can certainly identify their favourite Aspect faster than their favourite face, and tell you which side it belongs to - which is probably important to sort out. Remember, all this casual free-stepping doesn't change that one side of their psyche is still labelled "evil, repress or remove whenever possible".

On a more *spicy* note, Seers rarely seem to think of themselves as romantic interests; if they do hook up with someone, they study and analyze them just like everyone else. They do think they're probably not a good choice of partner, but that can be a touchy subject they'd rather ignore. By contrast, Witches fetishize it, always with the speeches spilling out of their mouths of how better off the world is without them, and how truly "resolved" they are with a current partner who's tamed/saved them. They couldn't bear the thought of going back into the dating scene, hurting people, they found true love even if no one understands, etc etc blah blah blah blah...

Witches are fun - but they're also very, very, very cliché-ridden.

Witches and Rogues both play things pretty safe most days, and don't make a big deal out of things. Yes, Rogues are protective and respond to trouble, but they also might chicken out, and that can be similar to a Witch's more fickle nature. Both won't have the best idea of who "they" are personally, and won't be in a hurry to have that conversation. As cautious as they both are with people in their circle, it is more noticeable how Witches..."fumble" at empathy. Working that Seer impulse is weird for them, and it's not much besides talk - they tend to be most confused if it *does* make people feel better. Rogues are incredibly attentive to friends in trouble, and are going to blame themselves if there's anything they couldn't do to help (though of course this self-loathing can often sabotage their legitimate capability). If Witches blame themselves for anything, it's going to be either "immutable" or long in the past, where distractions to help friends feel better will be much more take-it-or-leave-it. If nothing else, Rogues don't have the Witch-Spiral-Speech_(tm) - one day, they're just gone.

Mages and Seers are ~~fucking nerds~~ both equally predisposed to carry themselves as professional, composed, and efficient. They pick their words carefully, don't raise their voice (often), and tend to make dirty jokes only when you least suspect it. The precise details of how they use their smartypants observations for themselves and what they impart upon you for your own good are, unfortunately, kind of difficult to sort as "Active" or "Passive" language. Both can have a point, both can be stubborn when they don't, and both can be far too sure they've got YOU figured out. One of the clearest things to look for is how they handle conflict: Mages stop trying to reason with people pretty quickly, and get right back to doing what they were doing. If it's serious business, then they'll go around or through you, depending on which is faster. Seers are much more patient in trying to get through to people, where even at their most caustic, they never seem too tired for a debate (or at least giving you a *thorough* lecture). Most importantly, Seers struggle to actually force anyone's hand - to throw a

punch, to ground a child, to ban someone from a group chat, whatever. At their most ruthless, the Guiding Prophets still prefer to work behind someone's back and skip any dick-measuring in squaring up, whereas the Lonely ones have a lot more traditionally pointless pride to defend. In fact, one of the last things you could check is just who gets squishy enough to need a hug. Crack a Seer's bluster and there's Witchy indecisive self-perception underneath it; still in all the ways they'd rather not dwell on, but even wanting to cut it out of themselves at least recognizes that it *exists*. Mages are more resolute in convincing themselves they are incapable of experiencing an inconvenient emotion. Even if something snaps their soul apart, they tend to learn all the wrong lessons, and just redouble their self-image and static principles. After all, that's what they **know** best.

I consoled a Mage after a breakup. I don't remember him crying. I remember him alternating between sounding like he was going to kill himself, or kill the guy his girlfriend left him for - but no, I don't remember him crying.

Heirs and Seers are Tier 1 Rivals, both proficient in gentle, casual guidance (enough that I officialized it). If Seers aren't as uptight - like in the previous example -, they can more easily slide into Heir territory, and make things difficult to parse. I mean, Heirs tend to do their homework, so more literal definitions on **know** aren't going to get you anywhere. The trick is when "gentle guidance" isn't an option anymore, and things get serious. While Heirs will usually try to avoid escalating things in the first place, and shut things down with words if they can intimidate through authority, more direct approaches are cleanly on the table after those attempts. If they can't work *with* you, they'll go around or through you, depending on which is faster. Seers are...well, everything described in the immediately previous section of "**Mages and Seers**". Heirs are the friendly face Mages lack, and Mages are the juicy center of "I don't *need* to play nice" that any Heir has lurking within their soul. They may not be in a hurry to break it out, but it's *there*, and all the finer details are redundant to so much of the previous entry.

Mages and Maids are both Active (which is to say, a touch self-absorbed), distant, and not used to second guessing things - which can sometimes blur the line a little. This confusion is cleared up not in conversation, but in action: Prospit Maids will happily tell you they'd prefer to be left alone and work on something important for you, whereas Prospit Mages will happily display how much they want to be left alone and won't tell you what they're working on because it doesn't concern you. Prospit Maids take people with them where Prospit Mages are cheerfully solitary; Derse Maids are immutably *relentless*, compared to the more wandering Derse Mages. Ultimately, Mages can more readily own up to doing only what they want and take a nap, whereas any Maid has trouble remembering no one's forcing them to do anything; what they consider to be "stable" will shatter every now and again, but you really can't break a Mage's stride even if you

cut off one of their limbs. Mages might flirt with ruthlessness if there is a legitimate threat (real or imagined) to a friend, but it's an exception that proves the rule - and Maids are a little less protective anyways, with a Bard instinct shining through.

And somehow, Pages are inbetween them. You know after a decade of working on it, I feel I've found my groove and that I can live as a true middle-ground between Mages and Maids, but it's still *weird*. It's not that way by default, so is my ability to better integrate the wills of others a choice or an outlier? There's this instability to all Tier 2's that Tier 3's resolve by not recognizing the imbalance...I think. Ask a neurologist. Or don't, they'll probably think you're crazy.

Mages and Pages are separated by a single notch, but it can feel like a world of difference in the most established examples. The unflappable stoic and the plucky little wannabe - apples and oranges. However, every so often, it's not impossible to find a Mage in a more Pagey position; either from a Derse Mage's fastidious anxieties boiling over, or a Prospit Mage whose unshakeable view of themself and the principles they must follow are *decidedly* unimpressive. Certainly one can get an apologizing worrywort who feels irrationally locked away from being a bolder self...but where's the spark? The pluck? The constant re-evaluation of their entire personality to try and not just *co-exist* with people, but *compromise* until everyone's happy? Having a few talents you'd like to touch up or a few people you'd like to make a home with is not the same as Page insanity, in all the wild spectacle and big speeches. Saying "I did what I wanted to do and no longer owe the world anything, bye" *meekly* does not suddenly turn that from anything other than a Mage sentiment. Really you should be able to draw lines long before asking the final checkmate question: where is the Page yearning for colourful bow ties and hats?

Mob of "Mob Psycho 100" is not a Page. He's also Spacebound. I have...issues, with his displayed philosophy. It's a good show, but man does it feel like hitting my funny bone.

Pages and Seers can get a little futzy if Pages have enough confidence to stop freaking out about themselves, but not so much that they'll openly take accountability. Living by a code and structure, along with all the depersonalizing mentioned, will mimic certain attributes of a Seer's clinical approach...but it certainly won't hold back the underlying lust for heroics, the "mutually beneficial" arrangements leaning selfish, and the Rogue touch of bending their words to try and help everybody (however they define "help"). Seers do have biases and wants, but they're as muffled and inconsequential as possible, which is why they have their reputation. Still, no matter who they are at their best and worst, Pages will often incorporate this mini-archetype if they think it'll help them reach people. Trying to chase verbose neutrality helps them get their points across without *explicitly appearing* as though it's personal, and helps sidestep the everpresent anxiety that they need to justify the right to be themselves. After all, they are but a humble servant, only here to help you be the best you can be - and that's how they get you. This is a cry for help.

Witches and Maids do actually blur a little as Prospits, where an easy going presentation can hide that Maids are not easy going at all. Dedicated hobbyists, but who's doing it for the hobbies and who for the dedication? What's a Witch's irreverancy, and what's a half-Bard's disinterest? Put them under some duress (or, more compassionately, pay attention when it happens) and it's best to look at who toughs through problems the simplest and most direct way; I ain't saying Witches can't buckle down and fight, but they do fight *smarter* and not *harder*. Maids are stubborn, and when they get an idea in their heads, they won't be subtle about it.

Aradia and Damara are a defined contrast, but Hussie clearly figured *someone* needed reminding on what a Maid's habits are.

Heirs and Maids aren't so much a comparison as they are a mistake. I mean a Maid trying to work with people is good, and an Heir having more faith in manifesting their will is also good. It's just...I mean it's much more unlikely an Heir will try, first off, since the slow and subtle process always gives them the most dopamine compared to rushing anything along. The thing is, a Maid trying to stuff down their impatience completely and play it slow is *agonizing*. Disagreeing with others has to be as high octane as their regular self - i.e, Bards. The engine was not built to run in first gear, and where Maids hit a familiar burnout by taking on too much, they're *torn apart existentially* if they try to keep filtering their instincts. Again, stubborn powerhouses, but it's a doomed effort to be stubborn against one's own stubborn nature. If people don't want what a Maid is selling, it's probably best to focus on what they can do alone; it will be enough for them, and they can find where that intersects with others later.

Knowing an actual Heir of Life, it's funnier watching Jane ruin herself trying to remedy her broken world and broken team. I can't help but feel my pal would just roll his sleeves up and feel alive trying to fix Dirk, Jake, and Roxy, you know? Jesus, knowing him, he might've actually found a way.

Maids are one of the more popular archetypes for heroines. I get it. Part of me wishes we got more variety. Damn it all, maybe Bards should get some encouragement.

Knights and Sylphs aren't off by much, which makes them harder to separate than Maids and Pages...though the trick is still probably "confidence". Knights respect other people's wishes too much for their own good, while silently (or, sometimes, loudly) aware of how that gets in their way; Sylphs live for other people, and "getting in their way" is usually in regards to them trying to decide people's lives for them. Sylphs don't take orders, not really, and even a recognized and reconciled Prince impulse is still going to fire up situationally.

Muses and Rogues are both very different definitions of "Passive", but saturated enough in those definitions that it can be hard to know what the tells are. Both Classes also run a similar binary of presentation-as-decided-by-trauma: a cheerily self-deprecating worrywort, or a more callous outcast

who's become far more situational on who they help, and who they'll accept help from. Ultimately, it comes down to the mechanism, not the palette: Rogues are reactive and (even if not *cynical*) skeptical, where Muses - no matter how soothing or suffocating - speak in absolutes and "ways of the world". A Rogue's call to action is, essentially, argument; a Muse's is assumption, in a presumed empathetic intuition. A Rogue's world is one where good has to be protected, lest it be snuffed out; a Muse's is very "all will be well (or won't), regardless of our actions or petty wants". A Rogue's self image is at best, a concerned friend, and at worst, an ungrateful jerk; Muses either go "hopeless wretch being punished for a sinful life" or "imperator of judgement" that just sounds pretentious to Tier 2 ears. Sure, Derse Muses wobble with uncertainty, but mostly they just wobble on how confidently they want to approach their compulsions, wrestling with a brain that will write entire *novels* worth of description in what people are thinking and how much they must hate the Muse and what they TOTALLY meant between the lines of a 2 minute conversation. To reiterate, Muses cannot read minds, but these intricate assumptions are a signature of theirs. Rogues will guess, gossip, worry, and assume like any human being would, but nothing quite so elaborate.

I used to have more trouble with this, but I've been getting sharper. It's subtle. Not every Class can be spotted in 10 seconds like Lords.

Muses and Pages might actually make a bit more sense, given that we're talking about Attuning to something greater and grander. Given their similarities of hero worship and wounded confidence, you can wind up with some very apt comparisons, even in regards to their unpleasant habits of guilt tripping others as easily (or at least, readily) as they're guilt tripped themselves. Course, Muses command ideas with the *expectation* they should, and it's not as prideless as they think it is; they're trying to skip the argument (and collapse if they can't), whereas Pages are argumentative little bastards. Toil, effort, glory, and a balance between practicality and dogma is the core dream to chase, which is a pretty hard contrast to Muses who either aren't doing anything or won't admit they are. I mean they're not really chasing dreams anyways - they live in one made for everyone else, and personal wants are indefensible no matter how much they've supposedly "earned" it. It's a sharp contrast to the personal meritocracy of Pages, where the finish line is always glinting in their eyes.

I have never met an AMAB Muse, but I've seen a few written, like *Shrek's* take on the Gingerbread Man (assigned male at bakery). Pretty good contrast to Pageisms, put next to their particular spin on Pinocchio.

Seers and Muses both don't do very much, focusing on the stories of others with a hands-off approach that's more talk than action - though, both have their own ways of *suggesting* action. Despite this disparate difference in intensity, they do both give off an air of certainty with their speeches and social placement, but there's still things you can track. For one, Seers know

where there's gaps in their knowledge, and while they're hesitant to admit it, that means knowing they don't know everything. Just because they "expected" certain outcomes doesn't mean they weren't juggling several other possibilities, and they adapt quickly to new information; being dead wrong is a temporary setback, and they have no pride to lose in admitting that professionally (or at least none they'll let you see). Muses survive not with moderation, but with esotericism and faith in principle: they're often so poetic and high-minded that it's difficult to argue with them on a practical level, and their biggest sweeping statements can be difficult to collect evidence against (if undone by asking "Where's YOUR proof?"). Isolation helps their dogma go unchallenged, while they're always keen to "what has to be done" and "shared responsibility" or the ever classic "this is what's best for you/your friends". On the occasions they do take direct involvement, most aren't prepared for an argument, with Derse Muses likely to scatter and Prospit Muses more likely to go cold. Self-destruction is consistent, but a half-Witch's sass always either downplays or obfuscates such thoughts - Muses might not want to bother anyone, but their downward spirals are a formal martyrdom.

I know Sapphire from Steven Universe is literally a prophetic oracle, but she doesn't track as a Seer. Doubly so given behind-the-scenes info of who she's supposed to represent, but let's not dwell on such things...

Witches and Muses are not the same Class at all, but they are both capable of playing the same role of "damsel". Helpless, supportive, penitent, peacefully preaching romanticized fatalism; a few twists on Witch habits will drift into what should otherwise be Muse territory. Importantly, the face Witches are putting forward here is still primarily constructed from their Seer side, and while there's certainly ways to distinguish that (mostly in a cheerful curiosity of question-poking), there's far more in comparing the Active impulses. Faux-Muse Witches are trying to put a history - or at least, *capacity* - of troublemaking behind them, which fits to the standard Muse cliché of suppressing selfishness...yet, in both cases, it's never as bottled up as it's advertised to be. Penitent Witches will always have spots and slivers of relapse to their most natural speaking voice: mischievous, playful, free spirited, willfully oblivious to consequences, and maybe-just-a-little-flirty. Even at their most sadistic and grudge filled, there's still plenty of people they have no issue with, where a familiar levity finds itself despite the apparent shame it's garnered. For Muses, this is a different beast: the [REDACTED] inverted impulse is the same cold cruelty we've gone over, and it only knows how to have fun at the expense (or at least exclusion) of *everyone* else. Derse Muses often pull this the most, but both variants will have brief excursions of expressing themselves, suddenly *very* hungry for all that validation and praise they've otherwise avoided. Witch-y Muses are twitchier to slights, and louder about expressing what always counted as one, testing the waters on expressing an ego they've not always let run free. Witches are a lot of things, but they're not black or white - crank up the

judgement, the preaching, the worldly speeches, and you've still got someone who does their best work without it.

Witches and Lords should seem pretty gosh darned differentiated, but it's still worth acknowledging in relation to Witches who veer off script. Sure, whether **commanding** or **changing**, both Classes don't tend to overthink their primary Aspect, to the point it becomes synonymous with "what they currently want". Now, while Lords can (and should) take their endless confidence down a notch, that kind of self awareness is unlikely to really tick any Witch boxes. By contrast, overconfident Witches can certainly blur into what this document has sectioned off as "Lord-isms": an off-the-rails chatterbox who believes their brain is incapable of bad ideas, smudging the numbers of their previous exploits to appear more special (if not outright supernatural), all while painting a picture of the future full of guarantees they can't keep. Of course, while this is all a lot to handle, even these Witches still adhere to their central cliches; while the *tone* might be Lord-like, the *content* of these rants is still of a multifaceted wearer of masks, humbly(?) hedonistic, delighting in how they've bamboozled their friends away from who they "truly are" - even if, frankly, they haven't. Even when it comes to putting the screws on, it's a spite that draws more on their close relation to Thieves, rather than Lord-like harassment and subjugation.

I *want* to say there are two kinds of Witches: the brilliant shining souls who will always find a way to play the same Witch routine while making it their own, and reckless flirts yammering on about magic crystals and ghosts while throwing a tantrum if you don't agree with their superstition or adultery. The truth (as I've experienced it) is that it can all flit back and forth despite it all; that you can narrow it down to "Personality Class #3 Prosperity or Derse", and no further than that. We are, ultimately, capable of change, and I will continue encouraging, if not empathy, at least lucidity. I'm certainly burnt out of smug party girls flirting until they feel like laughing about how much their boyfriend could kick my ass.

There's also something else to mention, and I might as well say it here: Witches and Lords are fucking **magnetized**. You put two of them in the same room, you could come back in a week and they're already dating. Witches take their little alliances seriously, and Lords are a reliable loudmouth who can boss a Witch around in every way they want, while being too ignorant to see all the ways they can't. The self-images either Class wants to keep up feed each other in a dishonest intimacy, making them all the more discontented at the thought of being anything else. Witches may buy the whole "helpless prize" narrative wholesale, which only makes them more susceptible to a Lord who will throw them away for the next piece of ass they see. Course, they might genuinely see the Witch as their one true and only, but if *anyone* is going to fall for their you-don't-know-the-real-me manipulations, it's a Lord, right? That's the thing; even if it's not abusive, even if they're not cheating on each other, it's just their worst traits feeding each other into something...skewed.

Suppose it's pretty trite for a Page to be raving about "why do girls date jerks" like this, right? Look, I got this far on answers cause SpaceWitch trusted me with all the insider knowledge - she had one hell of an ex. I already learned to stop chasing Witches.

Witches and Thieves are a notch off, but it's easy to forget that since Witches don't see a point in openly identifying as an asshole. The thing is, sometimes, they will openly *be* one; toying with people because they can, wearing their cruelest mask, and burning bridges explicitly rather than implicitly. These are engorged states of aforementioned underlying preconceptions: that the colour of their soul is as an aberration, a

manipulator, an immutable poison that will let everyone down. It's not often this will be their first foot forward, but it's not never either, and these phases of an individual's projected persona will (ironically) borrow from the Thief toolset. Before we identify the most caustic Witches, we should acknowledge that the line is only blurred from one side; Thieves don't *like* minimizing damage, where even trying to write it off is more "justified retaliations" and not "harmless mischief". Their list of sins is advertised and decorated, even if it's not that bad...which should make you all the more concerned of any Witch who can manage the same output.

This was a fun topic for me and SpaceWitch. She sent me a scene from *Lost in Translation* as homework. I get what she means - Witches off the rails.

So, even if we're not discussing Definitely-Thieves, how do we sort out the Maybe-Thieves muddying the waters? Rude, callous, spiteful, violent, leaning on people while staying all kinds of prickly, what's the tell? The answer isn't to look at the mask (i.e. Active impulse) but what's underneath; Witches-Gone-Wild and Bog-Standard-Thieves are not rebelling against the world, but their *perception* of it. Pry past the bluster, and there's either someone flatly ignoring Seer duties, or someone struggling to lash back at Knighthood's demands. Thieves are defined by the double-think of breaking perceived chains while seeking validation (disapproval counts) of others, often pretty loud on how people "should and shouldn't react", always with shades of nervousness towards potential rejection. This breed of Witch is arranging their own Active and Passive dichotomy in the same fashion, but the perceived rebellion is against polite pretense, and the misfired fulfillment is simply being a more unpleasant example of Seer question-poking. The world is still blameless, it just isn't beautiful; it's a mediocre garbage fire not worth getting worked up over, even though it's still a Seer's eyes that can articulate that vision. In many ways, this makes Witches more dangerous, where the lack of confidence needed for upkeep (or guilt to stuff down) allows for years of callous curiosity and disinterested drifting. Thieves *break* into Knights, but Witches can easily lose track of where the lines are, tainting future reforms with the idea that "nothing truly changed". Witches are (still) never as bad as they think they are...but at their worst, all that means is that cruelty like this really was just an excursion, and not "the real me".

Damara is one of the meanest Witches out there, but even with Thieves being one of the closest comparisons to that edge, there's still so much distinct that I really don't know what else to say to someone who can't tell the difference. I think, in the case of any confusions, it's so much less a matter of vibing with the Witch title as much as reputation, in both Class and myth: feminine, mysterious, desirable, untamed. I don't wanna' knock anyone trying to style themselves in this regard, but even in regards to AMABs, I've *seen* the Witch impulse run next to masculinity - whether born with it, or discarded. Seers ARE Witches simultaneously, and the fact that they're less likely to flaunt Witchy-thoughts (let alone *loudly insist they totally are one*) is a better demonstration to the subtleties and shame the class embodies.

Over mythologizing the Witch Class as some "peak" of femininity does nothing but harm. First, it imposes invalidating complications to any gender questioning types who belong to the Class. Second, it creates *more* invalidating complications to those transwomen/transfemmes who desire the

Witch Class trying to assert their femininity, feeling that anything on an AMAB end is a fail state that suddenly unmakes their legitimacy (it doesn't). Third, and most importantly, it only further codifies the notion of "gendered classes" - something that I continue to insist has no inherent truth, beyond the harmful illusions we propagate. Sex isn't gender, and I would think that any queer ally should know the danger in acting like it is. Even when it might seem momentarily convenient to an isolated argument, it damns the rest in a devil's bargain.

Seers and Thieves, surprisingly, have more parallels than **Witches and Thieves**. Sure they're *half*Witch, but the inverted arrangement is both more liable to be a snarky smartass right to your face, and to be up to something while they do it. Much of this is already trodden territory, where Seers deciding to be sassy about their lectures doesn't change that they *are* still only lecturing you, trustworthy *enough* in having your best interests at heart. Of course, they could always lie; keep you in the dark and tell you only what they decided you "need" to know. Hell, if they really don't like you - if they decide you having it coming -, then it'd be easy to tell you only what you wanted to hear, while they do anything from steal your wallet to ruin your entire life. For Seers, being a Passive Class can just mean having a wider range of influence; still greatly invested in the stories of other people and how they might be guided, but for an increasingly narrow selection of those to benefit. Under these circumstances, Seers can easily wear the same mask a Thief does: a shameless snake, taking advantage of anyone they have to, while anyone they help was either a means to an end or a careless mercy.

Now, to either Class, this is still a brave face meant to blot out guilt and dependency to others. Trying to measure the exact degrees of how far they'll go, how cruel their insults, how much it's bullshit to protect who they care about, all of that will only give you fuzzy results. The better thing to look for is how Seers trick people: acting like normal Seers. Regardless of how smart they are and how well these plans work, it is still employed through so much diplomacy and being purposefully underestimated. Thieves are *shamelessly* less subtle, quick to flaunt their ego as much as defend it against any perceived attacks. Biting their tongue is either so much numb "Uh-huh", or *slathering* people in praise like a cheerleader - or, rather, a Knight. No matter how well a Thief juggles these faces, they can only naturally find compromises between them, and not outside the Tier 2 stakes they're playing with; convincing, long-term theatre will require a surprising amount of genuine training. To what is bestowed instinctually, it's a different kind of guile...and if it feels like Seers might be the more dangerous of the two, you didn't hear it from me.

I'm not going to blame anyone who is intimidated away from "One Piece", with it's thousands of episodes over its multi-decade journey. Still, I recommend *at least* watching up to Arlong Park, and everything it revealed and resolved about Nami. In every facet before and during that arc, she is wholly a Seer, and an excellent example of the spectrum of possibilities that comes with it.

Of course, even at her worst, she is sympathetic, and forgiven as the cast takes her in and continues on their wacky adventures. I already aired my grievances on the Seer of Hope I knew. I'm sure you can use your imagination.

Thieves and Pages are both trying to “fix” themselves into bigger people, hoping to support their friends as much as seize power. Even then, both Classes feel squeamish if they’re in charge of more than they personally feel they deserve. Now the obvious thing to look for between these two Rivals, is that one constantly steps on toes for sport, and the other tries desperately to make everyone happy - which bizarrely makes Thieves the more trustworthy ones. They have trouble sitting on secrets, and love to be the first one to make reveals, including “I screwed you over, watcha’ gonna’ do about it?”. Pages are the long-term deceivers, and when their Rogue impulse is as bent as it gets, they can be very dangerous. They’ll encourage everyone to underestimate them, displace their intent through “mutually-beneficial-agreements”, and screw over whoever they can justify...which, isn’t actually everyone. Malevolent Pages can only imitate the impression of true ruthlessness; their half-and-half lucidity makes them great schemers, but sickened by their own hypocrisies. Stretching the truth only highlights they’d rather not lie at all, and pretending to help easily trips into *actually* helping, even if they thought - or hoped - they were too far gone. This isn’t to say some “heart of gold” redeems their actions - only, their lack of commitment reflects someone who still has more in common with Maids than Thieves. In fact, if Pages are imitating not the *reputation* of Thieves, but the *attitude*, they’re probably doing a helluva’ lot better for themselves in terms of confidence, competency, and contentedness. At that point, the tell is a habit of angrily telling people “You’re doing a horrible job trying to hurt me, what you should really do is [completely genuine instructions on how to hurt the Page]” - which certainly identifies the “Servant” Class.

Saul Goodman from Breaking Bad/BCS is probably the best example of a scheming Page, and Moxxie of Helluva Boss is a good example of “snarky but meaning well”. Forgive me if the true north of self-interest in my Pagey heart makes me a bit hesitant to go any further on awful shit I’ve done, and sincerely hope to do less of.

Rogues and Thieves are the Paired Outlaw Classes, but that isn’t always obvious. Thieves are - despite whatever particular quirk or gimmick they’ve latched on to - consistent, at least in terms of competitive antagonizing. Of course, the theatre comes before the substance; while some may legitimately be “bad motherfuckers”, there’s far more grocery clerks and programmers who chase that same aggressive bravado. Rogues show more variance in their presentation, making those in comfortable situations do little to ever draw attention to themselves, voicing their compassion and complaints infrequently. In short, if Rogues are going to *act* dangerous, it’s usually because they *are* - or, more specifically, ‘have to be’. Harsh conditions can create some bonafide survivalists who won’t shy from violence, and hold a more mocking edge to their jokes and deflections. This prickly attitude certainly creates a mirror to Thieves (and arguably, is as far from Page-isms as possible), but telling the two apart is surprisingly simple: ambition. No matter what circumstances a Rogue is placed in, no matter who they piss off or fuck over, they *still* can’t put themselves first; the

wrongs to be righted must be to others more than anything, and while some personal vendettas might be rationalized, they certainly won't pursue profit or vanity. Thieves are ~~attention-whores~~ prideful, and no matter who they help, their personal narratives revolve around *their* special circumstances and *their* special talents. Rough Rogues still don't like drawing attention to themselves, and won't mind letting other people take the pedestal. Beyond that, if you do manage to get close enough to them (even if they explicitly said you shouldn't bother trying), there's still cracks in their armor where they'll trip up into more established Rogue awkward kindness.

The Rogues I'm describing here are...not, really the type you meet playing video games. They're certainly IN quite a few videogames, but how much is oversaturated stereotype? If I hear about the genuine article, it's in second or thirdhand accounts; the most immediate taste is in the Rogues I know, who certainly know who they might be (or *want* to be) if circumstances were different. They know what it looks like, to see their principles put to a test where there is no room to apologize, shuffle, or avoid confrontation. There is a violent purity to a Rogue who is still programmed to skew morality in the name of close friends they empathize with, showing cruelty to the injustices they know personally; to wear the shades of gray on their sleeve, with all the guilt that comes with it. They're malleable, after all, knowing that someone else's story would see them the villain. The rough edges solidify their self-perception as someone not worth fighting for, leaving them flummoxed when someone does. What do you do with that? Why would people treat you kindly if they're not expecting anything in return? Push past all the barriers, and you might've sated the buried Page impulse looking for someone to prove their worth with something concrete - but doing so still puts them at a disadvantage, because you're giving them so much kindness which they don't feel like *they* deserve. The moral framework wobbles under pressure, and puts them off center in a way that's just so goddamn endearing.

Grace from Infinity Train I'd say, though while I've been more confident on other examples before, I'm less sure now. Rogues are malleable, blurring with other Classes too easy, while "Rogue" is, itself, a Class name that comes close to being a compliment...

Rogues and Pages are an Inversion with some of the most bleedover, certainly in regards to polite yet pervasive negative self-talk. Pages spend far more time than they'd like scared away from who they want to be (read: the Page impulse itself), and fall back on the compromises and appeasement of the Rogue impulse. Rogues, when not as rugged as we described in the "**Rogues and Thieves**" section, are prone to awkward-yet-charming theatrics, invoking their Page side with twice the undermining. This can lead to a misunderstanding of what "Pageisms" and "Rogueisms" even are, but sorting the two ultimately isn't that difficult. Pages do (hopefully) genuinely care for their friends, but they are *never* unaware of the gnawing pull to zealous superstardom; it is a higher priority for them, where even suppressing it is a fairly obvious struggle they can't keep up forever. Just as well, while Rogues might understand "you should take care of yourself/talk back to people" in a clinical sense, it's often a foreign concept in practice, unless applied to anyone and everyone around them. Both Classes remain in such routine internal friction that they can rationalize either impulse as the problem, or even both simultaneously...but you don't have to look too hard for which one is the lesser evil, and the more palatable poison. Rogues with cheery theatrics usually phrase it as a sort of martyrdom, pridelessly avoiding profit, and only trying to cheer people up. Just as well, for as much quiet listening and gentle consolations Pages are *capable* of, they will always *prefer* sharing personal talents and stories, trying to be someone

competent and successful enough to have more to share. The spotlight terrifies them both, but as said before, they can both grow enough to realize there's a balance in facing it or fleeing it.

Thieves and Lords can both be sadistic assholes, but not only is that not a Class in itself, it isn't all they are. Even as their first foot forward, it's important to pay attention to the larger picture of their social dynamics, and the exact motivation behind the insults. Thieves pushing into Lord levels of self-important volume don't lose their center: a prickly little Adaptive impulse, surrounded by a Passive Attuning. Faux-Lord Thieves still rely on outside influence as much as they lash out at it, determined to be someone else's vision of a devil, a savior, or both. Meanwhile, while Faux-Thief Lords can come off as more "scrappy punk" than "ubermench", beneath that surface-level theatre is the same wellspring of ego there always was. It might come off as Thieffy to keep *insisting* on boasts to a world they haven't convinced yet (or even themselves), but, whether lighthearted or genuinely petulant, these are still claims of "I was just *born* talented", "Things come naturally to me", and "I came up with a great idea right now and am going to bet everything on it". That these sentiments can be expressed as modest smarm, within the ranks of others, or in sporting competition, doesn't change the essential Lordlike supremacy at the root. Thieves and Lords both have issues feeling like they're never going to be good enough, but Lords either insist they totally are, or deflate into frauds, or change the definition to something squarely personal. The Thief identity leans *into* the struggle; an underdog always trying to catch up (much like their Rival, Pages), contrasting Lords starting at the finish line. Lords being surrounded by people who will tease and shrug off their bluster takes them down a peg, sure...but not a Tier, let alone two.

I've avoided mentioning the Sonic the Hedgehog series when possible here, if only to avoid the correlation it draws to my autism diagnosis. Contrary to the people who believe a single Crush 40 song does a Classpect make, the blue blur's been writ as a Thief of Breath in 95% of depictions. Admittidly, I never read the Fleetway comics across the pond, where he's infamously got the worst temper he's ever had - maybe Lordlike, or maybe just the meanest Thiefisms possible. The real standout is Jet the Hawk, the rival speedster from the "Sonic Riders" racing games, who was especially given alot of time to flourish as a character in the IDW comics. He's *definitely* a Lord, but his emotional-support-seer second-in-command stops him from ever getting too big for his britches. Fun little twerp. Genuinely endearing. Real Lords should take notes.

Bards and Thieves can *also* both be sadistic assholes, at much closer levels of aggression. A swarm of prickly insults and undermining from someone who does *want* to be your friend, but not enough to use honey instead of vinegar. Truthfully, it shouldn't be *too* hard to find the precise line between Thief competition and Bard condescension. Bards will inflict their sadism - and their justifications to why - in roundabout ways, or nebulously, or not at all. Thieves have a bit more clean cause/effect, far warier to their social dynamic: they're *professional* douchebags. They're going to make *damn* sure everyone gets the best quality of insults and harassment, and they're gonna' make it look easy while they do. Alas, such

a warped empathy is still a potent one, still adherent to connections to make up for all those mushy, insecure emotions at the root. While your mileage may vary on how “sympathetic” this is, it is always there; always a key component to the Thief/Knight dynamic. Meanwhile, Bards are (as in so many cases) running on unquestioned Maid self-confidence, filling in the gaps where guilt or self-reflection ought to be. If you finally draw a line in the sand, they’re more likely to simply look at you confused, wondering where all this is coming from - and again, your mileage may vary on sympathy.

Bards and Lords don’t have much overlap as Prospits, but Derse ones have similar methods. Both will be loud and willfully irritating (mostly in their youth), but try to isolate Lords in both anger and initiative: Derse Bards are, even as pariahs, a Passive Class. They orient themselves around others, preferring to needle them with no rush in what they bring to the table. Lords are loud and clear in how they see the world and what they stand for, even with rudeness and detachment. Derse Lords might play along for a bit, but they won’t turn down an opportunity to show strength and snap back at critics. Lords have a strong center, but it’s at the forefront of their thoughts, demanding certain conditions and boundries (and routinely straight up lying). A Bard’s neglected Maid instincts are still dutifully resilient despite hiding in the back of their head, making for thick skin that doesn’t sacrifice flexibility. Like a seal. Or something.

If you’re watching a movie and there’s the leader bully with the sidekick bully who goes “Yeah, what he said!”, you’re probably looking at a Derse Lord/Derse Bard partnership. I’ve seen it in practice once, though most Lords I grew up with worked alone.

Maids and Lords have more overlap, though most of it is “Insanity”. An overpowering attuned Aspect makes for explosive impulsivity, after all. Now, yes, this document has praised the former more for their work ethic, and not for nothing; Lord motivation easily spills over into believing (or only insisting) oneself already perfect, with the only thing to prove being that they have nothing to prove. Even Lords with heavy momentum are uniquely preoccupied with the *optics* of it all, codifying and living up to their reputation - even as that reputation confusingly deifies “I don’t care what anyone else thinks”. Fundamentally, Lords - like the rest of Tier 4 - deal in absolutes, and Maids don’t; not to perfection, reputation, and even consistency. The powerful work ethic *only exists* because the work is just shy of good enough, or only above average, while their proficiency exists because their conviction to principle *alone* never hits Lord levels. Maids ~~do nothing but edge~~ aren’t just an impulse, but an itch; an “almost” that cannot close the gap by definition of its own existence. Never defeated, never idle, but at the cost of never being *done*. At their lowest, “confused and aimless”; at their highest, “confused and firing in every direction”. They might brag about their deeds, but they don’t form the myths surrounding all it represents, fulfills, and promises. Why would they? Should they? They’ve

already got a good thing going. If they don't, they'll figure it out. No wait, they were fooling themselves. You promised to help! Wait, that conversation never happened? Well you should've known anyways. Okay that doesn't make sense but they're still mad. And being mad means something. What are they doing with their life? Maybe they care what people think, maybe they don't, so what if they change their mind mid-argument, "why is this such a big deal what do you mean I brought it up?"...so goes the placid stream of consciousness making up their soul.

Pages are like cars that are hard to move out of neutral. Maids are like a car that doesn't have neutral. Lords don't have brakes. Mages are a peaceful bicycle ride. I'm losing this metaphor.

Rogues and Knights are our returning Tier 2 Rivals: devout to others, but sometimes clinically if their heart isn't in it, all with a coherent Inversion tugging at them to break away and look after themselves. Put on a brave face, punch someone's shoulder, crack some jokes, be just a *little* annoying...and if its too much, if they cross the line again when you asked them to stop, *that* is certainly a Knight - or, rather, a Half-Thief. While the matched intensity makes the disparity of their worldview similar, the internal logic does not match: Rogues hold the same social decorum of Pages, and are personally obligated to never take up too much of someone's time, often doubling back on comments before anyone asks them to (even if, you know, no one had a problem with it). The precise internal dialogue Knights have with their Thief side is complicated, but still not hard to recognize: step on everyone's toes, tell them to chill out, keep refusing to update them on all the "fun surprises" planned. The Knight half is just the one that actually *does* want to help friends calm down, and make sure those "fun surprises" actually are fun - but, you know, if that's not appreciated, the snapback is low-blow "not worth the effort" insults. Rogues are as rude as Pages: either quietly behind your back with all the guilt sitting on their tongue, or firmly critical on the exact issues with dignity (or trying to (or not trying, but convinced that's what they're doing)). That's the thing when all the selfish and personal feelings are on the whole "servant" end of things: standing up for yourself (or blindly lashing out) requires a certain decorum, and it's one that the Thief/Knight axis is *proud* to ignore.

Yang from *RWBY*, take your bets folks; I never went past season 2 and don't remember that much anyways. Whether a legitimate chimera or something definitive I didn't clock, ambiguity is worth something as a case study. Probably.

Witches and Sylphs may occasionally meet the same surface traits of "cheery, but snippy". Sylphs have a lot of energy even when they're trying to be there for everyone else, and a Witch's wandering downplays their signature as an Active Class. So they might both start group projects, or get really excited out of nowhere, and nurse a noticable but not prioritized collection of sour thoughts about themselves. Stress test it: Witches wander away if the heat goes up, but Sylphs always dig in and show the Princey side to any kind of challenge waved in their face (real or imagined). Witches

don't have a damn thing to prove to anyone, and that makes sociability a choice and not a directive.

If a Witch pouts and whines, it's part of a bit. If a Sylph does, they're legitimately immature and have a terrible ability to negotiate.

...Yeah, yeah, we'll talk about it. Active-Active pair? That was the wildest fucking thing from Hussie's lore drop. God, the day that happened, so many people got in my DMs asking if I was going to retire - bitch, I feel like Big H retired when they said that. Ya'll are nuts.

Knights and Lords have fundamentally incongruent DNA, but some surface details that match: propping people up, intense bravado, hard work, obnoxiousness, etc. While the sense of hierarchy is a good sign, it's not universal: "defused" Lords get better and better at putting others first without needing to affirm their ego, while Knights can twist their bravado into an *alarming* amount of aggressive boasting. As it turns out, trying to whip friends forward through verbal harassment is a natural (but not stable) synthesis of the Thief/Knight impulses. To discern the two, focusing instead on key tenants: attachment, and losses. Lords are capable of loyalty, but even their most devoted and lasting bonds exist along fetishized self-sufficiency. No matter how much they appreciate the company, they can handle things alone, and figure you can too - or should, before they have to admit they have better things to do than babysit. Should that appreciation of company stray into longing and codependence, expect them to treat that as *corrosive* to their self-image, rather than the Knight tendency to make it load-bearing...at the potential price of dangerous obsessions. Overall, Knights are far less shy about cooperation, and doing something they don't like just for the benefit of others isn't some noteworthy digression of their instincts but, rather, their entire lifelong shtick. Just as well, Knights don't need to be seen as invincible; being out-of-their-depth is embarrassing, but not existentially terrifying, and a Faux-Lord Knight is still one who can slide things back into being a walking punchline. At the end of the day, Knights stick to their rules (even shit ones), and Lords will openly, shamelessly extol the virtues of doing what feels right in the moment, gleefully inconsistent beyond their gut.

Karkat was loud, but Karkat was also Karkat - there is no one he hated more than himself, and that was not a well-kept secret. Dave was drawing from a different source, but, I've known Derse Knights who up the bravado to dangerous levels. They still hate themselves, it's just slightly harder to tell. Honestly, Trevor Phillips of GTA V is a fairly comprehensive example of the Knight script run in the *worst* possible direction. He's worth a good look.

On the other side of things, Chai from Hi-Fi Rush might be good to bring up here, where his antics could be compared to Knight-like class clownery. The snag is that Knights only get that annoying if they want you to hate them, because their self-hatred screams they deserve that infamy. Chai, however, genuinely thinks he's hilarious, and that far too many people - even close allies, when they criticize him - aren't worth his time. He does wise up by the end, but never steps outside the script of a Prosperit Lord, for good or ill.

...I did *like* Chai (by the end), but a fictional Lord can be written to grow empathy and self-awareness at the stroke of a pen. Not only that, but his T-for-Teen misfit cartoon world has no place for any of the aggression and sexual harassment real Lords can get up to. All the sharp edges are sanded off, and I can't fault them for that...just, wax wistful on how hard it is to find real Lords you don't have to watch your back around.

Knights and Pages are Paired, but both can be wound up so tight that you might not be sure if they're a lowballing Page holding back potential, or a *particularly* dysfunctional Knight who's failing to keep their armor up. Both will idolize people, but Pages often do so while taking notes, seeing traits they wish they had and encouraging advice they should probably take themselves; Knights often don't *want* the praise they give other people, "serving" without "belonging". Personal gripes always go through the Active component first after all, regardless of what Class we're talking about - and despite *being* an Active Class, Pages frequently flounder when it comes to confrontation. At their lowest, other people will set a Page's own rules to life for them, making them punching bags and human footstools. At middling confidence they have outbursts and breaking points, which they often aren't sure how to (or if they *should*) justify; frequently tiptoeing around subjects, or trying to avoid people. A confident (or overconfident) Page will have the guts to tell people off, but it remains within a moral framework of cause/effect, crossed boundaries, and karma. Doesn't matter if it makes sense or not, it still requires Active upkeep for the Page not to collapse into old habits. A Knight's temper is far more wild, far more rude. Ultimately, you're trying to distinguish unapologetically self-centered, and overapologetically self-centered.

Both can wind up as "nice guys", if you're wondering. Hopefully it's just a phase.

Knights and Bards both blur loyalty with obstinance, especially in the case of Derse variants. Even Knights can be fickle about when a situation is actually serious, holding off their solemn-protector shtick to misfire the Thief impulse into blind harassment with no pride or profit. They can employ the same Thief habit of downplaying transgressions as "Not actually a big deal the more I think about it", which rhymes with a Bard's invented excuses as soon as they're called out on something. Of course, Knights aim this more in "You aren't supposed to be mad", calling attention to their static ideas of people, law, and their role as the outsider, where Bards are very content with their place in the universe - so long as it's in earshot. Failing that, Knights being pissed off is the same spite and persecution we've gone over, where a Bard showing temper is...a very different animal. As rare as it is to happen, a properly riled up Bard swings wild at the world and the people who don't see it all *clearly*, pushing their long postponed revolution as something that Needs To Happen Now Or So Fucking Help Me. Knights might burn bridges, but Bards will nuke the ground they're standing on if the call for a defiant statement to shock society has overtaken them. Expect a half apology that leaves the door open to go wild again someday, compared to a Knight's flat answers of "I'm a failure" or "Fuck you guys".

Like I said, I've seen some shit, and it keeps Gamzee in perspective. Also like I said, Bards in starring roles are hard to find...but it's hard to play the detective in Disco Elysium as anything else. Spacebound, as I figure.

Pages and Bards do have a lot of internal similarities, in their wistful ambitions and chronic doubts, but they respond with decidedly different masks: the guilty apprentice, and the buffoonish philosopher. Now, while the rowdiest Pages you'll find would belong to southeastern Aspects - Time, Heart, Rage, Blood -, even this would be an undisguised act of principle and structure, making the discrepancy all but one-sided. Any Bard who is genuinely being confused for a Page is *very* far on the backfoot, unable to muster a shit-eating-grin consistently, or pressed into circumstances where it simply isn't an option. Without it, the inner mechanics of Bards becomes more clear: always confused, difficulty committing to what they say, not trying to piss people off but genuinely terrible at keeping their mouth shut, loyal to their friends (or at least convinced they are), and aware of how their wildest passions remain out of reach. Parts of this will ring true to Pages, but the eternal foot-in-mouth stream of consciousness is a Bard staple, even if this variant is clearly aware of how few favours its doing them. It is reflexive to doubt others, to cast judgement, to assume someone is wrong or lying, and the lack of shennanigans softening these attacks only results in a repetitive sentiment of "Whatever, I don't know, get off my back, I'm just stupid". Perhaps more than Pages, it's clearer how this Bard variant really is the other half of Maids: shared frictions and impulsivity, but the borrowed pressure to do everything themselves is *tempered* by counter-arguments of "I can't", "I shouldn't", "I won't", or "the people around me seem to have it figured out". The Bard impulse can be noble in corroding cruel certainties and easing burdens, and it's best to recognize that nobility without thinking it irreconcilable to everything else they are.

Originally, I wrote this as more of a distinct Bard subtype, but I've reconsidered lately. There's a good chunk of Bards out there who just don't fall into the traditional clichés...or, at least, the ones I *assumed* were traditional. The main Bard section was rewritten to accommodate the wider spectrum, and this was tweaked.

Media examples here are sparing, but there's two good ones: *F is For Family's* Kevin, in the mundanity of a Bard who can't keep his confidence, and (bear with me) Atreus from *God of War*, the actual Hopebound under his Lord of Time father. I'm also privileged to know one, and happy to see him grow into his own - if, annoyed at his scheduling, still.

Bards and Heirs are not anything you're going to confuse often. The strong center with Adaptable interventions on others behalf is a commonality on paper, but...there's a *wealth* of personality differences that spin out from these roots. For this reason, the clearest arguments on which of the two a person may belong to is simply to trace their life before or after whatever point of confusion has led to here. For Bard-like Heirs, this is pretty straightforward: fatigued with their primary role, but not committing to brooding reclusion, they compromise as "aloof"; more jokes, less scheduling, and less commitment to that scheduling. Prosperit Heirs will stray into this more unconsciously, either due to failing to find their voice as a leader/therapist in the first place, or weighed down by the strain of living as one. Equally, this means they're the most likely to stray *out* back into explicit Heirisms, without contemplating the greater nuance of what they

are or aren't. Derse Heirs, however, live on those obsessions, and will put quite a lot of work into appearing carefree - which, granted, is technically the main Derse Heir routine, just scrambled. Yet, both sways are still identifiable from not being as *impulsive* as Bards; reckless, resigned, even self-destructive, but never negligent of what the cost is. Assuming they're not just greenhorns, then you're looking at an Heir finding poetry in letting the world slip through their fingers, rather than try to play control freak all the damn time. Still, it's this measured understanding that marks them not as a wildcard, but a face card flipped over.

My brother's got a funny sense of humour, I tell you. Never going to unhear "Pog is leaking out of my balls". That I swear Bard isn't even up for consideration for him should, hopefully, mean something.

...What do YOU think Spike from *Cowboy Bebop* is? Cause I'm not sure.

Bards themselves are less likely to raise confusion. Sure, maybe they find it in themselves to put their money where their mouth is, stick up for their convictions, stop lazing around and really get shit done...but, this was always Maid Inversion, built into minds since Day 1 of Bardhood. Whether that's embraced in Classpect synthesis, or remains a shadowed technicality of whispers, what intersection does it have with Heirs? A patient listening ear, a protective tinkerer, a wandering do-gooder? Bards (and Maids, harmoniously) are terribly impulsive; a two-headed beast of doing or saying shit without thinking, with the greater Aspects coming into shape despite the lack of any clear plan. Bards especially as so busy flitting between "I am a loveable clown" to "I am unable to stop saying clown shit" that any faux-Heir behavior is probably at the *far* fucking end of emotional development...or, like, "shoot their dog in front of them" levels of trauma. A Bard who not only has Maid resolve in core principles to uphold, but levies their **destructive** cynicism for measured problem solving and mediation?...well, first off, you should give them some positive reinforcement. And a medal. But secondly, you can still narrow that it's a Bard you're dealing with by tracing their Aspects; one overflowing, and one erratic. Whatever you have to twist to get Bards to look like Heirs, it's unlikely that Maid and Mage will line up in parallel too. Maybe Faux-Bard Heirs will get cynical about their main Aspect, but that doesn't mean the Inversion falls under "do shit for the sake of itself" moxie - and likewise, Magey "contented understanding of one's strengths and limitations" just ain't *any* Bard's mantra. Still, the best smoking gun is still probably peeking at awkward teenage phases, before the curveballs.

Breaking Bad's Badger is a very Bardy Bard. Enough of one that you'd be forgiven for treating the gulf of difference between him and Jesse Pinkman as reflective of different Classes...but, I genuinely would claim them both as Derse Bards. In the early seasons, I'm less likely to find disagreement on that, but I don't think his hardening heart and sharpening nerves going forward are the mark of any different Class. Maidisms persist regardless, but a galvanized Bard impulse is a funny thing you don't get to see too often - and I suppose we don't either, when he rides off into the sunset right as we see him at his peak. Proper cowboy.

...Bear with me on this next one.

Red Dead Redemption's Uncle is a very Bardy Bard. Enough of one, in all the cliches and extremes, that me *daring* to suggest that John Marston constitutes must sound even crazier than it already does. I didn't have a firm answer in the first game, but the prequel giving us time with that angsty good-for-nothing John? Man, I *gotta* wonder...

Pages and Lords have a very disparate median in terms of attitude, but they both want fundamentally the same thing: to live in accordance with virtue, to rally virtue under their voice (implicitly or explicitly), and to personally exhibit those virtues in a way that helps people and makes themselves feel special. Hell, narrow down sway and Aspect, and they usually want strikingly similar attributes and accolades - but that can lead to the trap of differentiating the two between wanting and having. To express doubts that you're up to the task of your own self-image, to shy away or outright resign from it, to intentionally invoke it as theatre when faith wavers, none of these are *exclusive* to Pages - and likewise, the delusions of grandeur, the dogmatic impulses and righteous tantrums, are not exclusive to Lords either. While Maids are the actual middle point between them, Pages and Lords generally share more common ground (I'd wager being born with toxic expectations of masculinity is a part), coaxing them into competitions around glory, sport, social standing, or just someone pretty. Both can be worthy of it as much as not; to truly empathize with those around them, lifting them up...or to fake that smile, while only seeing people for what they can get out of them. As much as it's important to distinguish the two, it's more important to illustrate that **Classes are not innately better or worse than any other Class, and none of them define how far we'll reach or how much we'll achieve**. Pages don't "promote" into Lords just because they found themselves, and vice versa; they both just need to grow up, and untangle themselves from the idea of themselves.

We're measuring intensity. Hussie already shared his words on who the "most powerful class is", and as much as I hope to pull enough of my weight and make any of that true, anyone is free to disagree with the assertion. More to the point, "power" - nebulous as it is - isn't the be-all-end-all of things to measure in the first place.

Pages are infamous for shame and cowardice, and I can't pretend even a majority of them end up as anything dignified; sometimes "power" is just getting what you want, and they'll just over specialize in self pity. We pay attention, we learn what works...Lords, do that less, and are even less prone to admit they're playing angles opportunistically. They've got a bad habit of just blaming things around them when life gets more complicated than something they're not immediately good at, and overcoming that still means they won't reach further if they already have what they want. Lords never run out of fuel, Pages have moments where they'll burn hotter than anything, and anything else I say is too tainted by all my own conniptions from the jackasses I grew up with - and, at times, the jackass I was. If nothing else, I was a real creep.

Pages and Lords are natural born enemies, really. I mean, one defaults to seeing themselves stuck in an unwinnable race, and the other thinks they're entitled to every gold medal they see - neither has to be familiar with the Classpect system to know, on some primal level, they're in the same competition. The self-aggrandizing alpha male, the self-critical beta male, usually fighting over the same girl - and believe me, masculinity almost always plays a part. You know how long it took me to figure myself out because of this bullshit? Lords lord their laurels, and that'll always incite a Page who's been trying their whole life to *earn* the right to gloat. It's invalidating to work so hard for permission to be oneself, and watch as the bullies get everything from luck or being too stupid to notice their failures...but, if Pages aren't careful, they learn the wrong lessons from it. They modulate themselves less, cheat more, chase girls (or whoever) they objectify into social credit, and become everything they hated just because they

thought that's how you win. They do it without losing sight of how the world works, of what the world looks like outside their bubble, and that makes them *very* good manipulators.

Maybe Pages really are more powerful than Lords...but we can be so, so much worse.

"Potential" is evident in Pages even from those who don't know the designation; that in their interests and tangents and accommodations, there's the aspiration of who they want to be and what they'd bring to the world. However, the path to realize any of this is wholly unique to the individual; from what memories made them, to the opportunities present in their circumstances (read: wage-bracket), and all the many compromises they'll accept or refuse along the way. To match - or even *exceed* - a Lord's volume is, however impressive, ultimately an entirely optional permutation. It also requires the highest upkeep of reassurance to maintain, making it surprisingly situational. The proudest boasts, the biggest promises, the most unflinching sympathies, the longest stretches without self-deprecation, all of it is still conscious theatre from someone who doesn't believe all their hype - who never could. Pages may stop being cowards, but it's just about impossible to stop being a worrywart over all the little details, especially since that overthinking didn't really feel like the problem in the first place. To Pages, it is not just clever, but *noble*, to acknowledge the nuance and complexity of life. It is at their worst that those nuances are away from prying eyes, but even those manipulations are prone to *appear* like reasonable observations and actions - because hey, there's good people on both sides, not here to make anything personal, ready to back off if there's a good enough argument. It's a good gift - and, sometimes, the genuine convictions of someone who won't back down, and has spent their whole life trying to find reasons not to. Whether they're right or not is besides the point, as a Lord-like Page - no matter how self-righteous, boisterous, motivated, temperamental, hypocritical, abusive, or whatever else - is still a Page from the *mechanism* of their thought, and not the results of it.

Deku from Macademia is a great example of a Page. I hope I'm not projecting, saying All-Might is one too.

I have more than I would like to admit in common with Caliborn, to the point of scaring myself with what I take pride in. Sometimes, it feels like that'd just be where I'd end up, if my childhood traumas were a little different and encouraged me to trust myself more. I have other people in place to keep me in check when I go too far, and I know I will sometimes. I know I have before, and I know that anything I do won't take it back. Every Page has a skeleton in their closet; something they can't make themselves the victim for, something they can't share. You have to acknowledge it if you want to do anything positive with yourself, otherwise you get increasingly used to lying to yourself in a loop of self-pity. I am still fine tuning all of this - both in advice for others, and how I carry myself - but I'm certainly feeling more on top of things these days. I am more openly cruel, more callous, less accommodating...but I do feel like more of myself. I care about my friends, I want them to be happy, that's a part of me too, sure - but Time is Time, and Pages are Pages. Looking too much for choices or palatability only damages the purity of the hellfire - of feeling comfortable in my own skin. I don't need anyone's approval on that. Never did. Wouldn't hurt. But it's not going to slow me down.

So what about Lords looking Pagey? Sure, the inner dynamics are the same: serve your gut, mythmake the past, help your friends, cry when life gets too hard. It's important not to see pity-parties as exclusive to Pages; both Classes have the strain of trying to sustain their position through theatre

and deeds, times where nothing short of a bullet will stop them from flying that flag. and times where all they have left is to wax sorrowful over all they aren't (and the prizes they don't have). Some Lords will even lead with this; far from their default confidence, instead secure in their own insecurity. It can make them kinder, maybe gentle...but not really *quiet*. Lords are a Tier 4 absolute, whether braggart or victim, people-pleaser or couldn't-care-less. Sure, Lords can stampede through arguments, but they can also aggressively agree without fully understanding. Both of these conclusions stem from something past intelligence: the notion that the details don't *matter*. . Put others first, play the underdog, admit your failures, but all too *fast*, too *untested* too *impulsive* - Pages have rules, and Lords have intuition. Even Aspect-wise, their Inversion is invoked far more rarely, and rather blunt when it does; a pat on the back and a shrug for when the big speeches falter. Again, Pages are built on compromise: the wavering, the hesitation, all refined and incorporated into caution and patience as their "ideal self". Lords are reckless, running ahead to have the "right" answers before they understand (or fully heard) the question - like a dog falling for a fakeout in fetch. The ones who truly mellowed out and learned their lessons still have those instincts, and all the scars of when they listened to it wholesale. A Lord can *choose* not to believe their own hype, but it never stops being an option.

A useful fiction is the trope of manchildren who inherit too much money and praise from their parents, running wild with it but crying when daddy won't bail them out from the consequences of their actions. There's truth in that, and I've met Lords who play that shtick regardless of how well-off they are or aren't - but hey, ask them, and I'm *sure* they'll attest it's right around the corner.

More recently I met someone who introduced themselves to me as a Page of Hope...and they were *not* a Page. Helped give me more to work with here - and incentive to make it more diplomatic, knowing they might read it.

Mages and Lords are two ends of the line on "believing in myself", and despite representing opposite intensity, it should be pretty obvious that *both* are (relatively) unshakeable in their conclusions on who they are and what they should do. Now Mages actually resembling Lords doesn't really track, as no matter how uppity or egocentric they might find themselves, it's far more difficult for them to act recklessly; they know the world does not revolve around them, and that nothing is guaranteed from hasty decisions. This lucidity is, in truth, the fundamental product of the intensity: how much is the self *owed* to influence? How much is *comfortable*? At a default, Mages will take to isolation, and Lords will take to spotlights (and violence (and poor business decisions (and vices))), but it's not entirely uncommon to find Lords who find comfort in a more modest approach. However they arrived there, Faux-Mage Lords have enough patience to not follow their every impulse and assumption, with the self-awareness to admit that they are generally an asshole - and that that is okay. This honesty is a healthy development for any Lord, but that doesn't guarantee empathy; a stoic attitude may just become another tool to dismiss complaints and warp perceptions, all from someone whose newfound clarity has not *removed* a

fundamental belief that the universe ought to match their wants. Maybe they've found wisdom in how poor their odds are, and questioning the worth of it all if they had it...but if you still can't tell Mages and Lords apart from the sheer *scale* of these philosophies, Failing all that, Lords are the ones who still have the most difficulty in regards to respecting personal space.

Heirs and Lords are beyond comparison from the descriptions given - but, this document is depicting the *mean*, not the *median*, of Classes. Quiet humble shoulder-to-cry-on, loud invincible braggart, both are perfectly reasonable ways to sum up the general manifestations. Still, we are capable of growth, of change, and any number of Lords have any number of reasons to try and embrace the allure of Heir-isms: advice-friend, compassionately argumentative, keeps the mood optimistic, stable sense of self, lets others lead while chiming in to confidently agree (and/or fix a few things). It feels pertinent to mention how commendable this all is - these Lords just avoided a swath of bad habits, measured their instincts fairly to the world around them, and can act as a positive and healthy individual. This is no small feat, and is almost exactly the kind of Lord this document has stressed is possible and desirable...but they aren't Heirs. Hell, if you're not lucky, then they're only faux-Heirs to a few specific people, and you can track down past friends and flames who remember indefensible acts and betrayals of trust. To be a Lord is not a death sentence or punishment, but it is a definable liability of a human personality - we will prioritize those hurt, hurting, and those in danger. They can be good people, but it is so much more work than they often *think* it is.

I have known some eggs. One, particularly, was a very close friend of mine for my first year of high school. Energetic, chummy, supportive, good for brainstorming. Picked me up in my worst moments, let me feel like I had someone in it for the long haul. Had a rough childhood, got a girl teen pregnant, all very mournful things for him to bring up, and I did my best to keep him steady; he hardly seemed like he needed it, but he appreciated me being there, and I appreciated him.

He's also the one who stole 200\$ from me, and blamed my MindBard friend. Which I believed at the time. When you experience something like that, reconcile something like that, it forever changes your definition of "genuine". I have become a more suspicious person than I care to admit, but I've met more Lords than I'd like who tried stunts on that same level. I choose to believe, optimistically, that better things are possible. I'm just not going to pretend those aren't slim odds, or offer help in a way that leaves me - or especially anyone reading this - vulnerable.

A Lord imitating an Heir has a few tells. For one, their arguments and corrections are much more common, and often on much smaller concerns that real Heirs would usually let go (but they still have a defined *point*, which is why we're not counting Bards). They're excitable, yes, and they will try to deify "your" accomplishments, but they do so in excess: their assurances are a red carpet, too much for too little, special treatment that isn't fair or earned. Lords are too quick to declare "Fuck 'em" in regards to human conflicts, where the only line is "friends of the Lord" and "everyone else" - which may be concerning for someone wondering how thin that line is. On another note, while Heirs may drop diplomacy and voice complaints

on occasion, Lords are significantly more prone to such fits: they blame their tools, blame the rules, or blame the competition when they're not immediately good at something - a common Lord trait, but they're trying to get other people to agree with them now. It makes them difficult to team up with in cooperative efforts, alongside their habit of ignoring orders and following their impulses - you have to work *around* them. Often, words just fail to register, and that goes triple when someone tries to hold them accountable to explicit fuck-ups; denying it is one thing, but there's a common trait of an eerie silence (maybe a grumble), moving on to a new topic, and then reverting to their most comfortable opinions tomorrow. See, these Lords aren't going to ever pull the Mage isolation routine, because **they already are inverted**; a Lord playing Heir is invoking their Passive side as far as it goes, and while that's impressive, it can only do so much to bridge the gap. Lords were never a Passive Class, and while they can be supportive friends, they too often lack the patience to tough through someone else's crisis or handle it with nuance. It's not impossible, but it's effort, not instinct - instincts only a true Heir has.

With all that said (along with everything else this document has stated or implied) Heir instincts are not infallible - only very, very good at appearing so. About as good as Mages are in appearing wise and principled, despite the foundational ingredients of that image being pride and assumption. Heirs (often Derse ones) may wax concerns that their efforts all feed a need for control, but the truth to both of these is that it is and isn't - it's just the nature of Classpects that our capacity to be genuine or frauds is often tied, all produced from the same central mechanisms. Heir underconfidence is the cost of the Mage impulse being at its bitter, inverted default; that who they are alone, with all the drama and contemplations that comes with, simply won't do as much good as "Mx. Perfect". This document has stressed Inversion, but in compromise: that any aimless dependencies in Heirs can be resolved through open and validated inner strength, and that a Mage's fixed delusions can be tempered with empathy and outside opinions. Of course, these are only subjective suggestions, and certainly nothing close to the limit of possibility; Mages can, as mentioned, fly off the handle; too fixated on their cause to see it clearly, too assured of their intuition to trust anything else. This monotonic megalomania is at least limited to what few crusades a Mage commits to, what with their inclination to isolation, and the attrition of justifying the position to themselves (if no one else). It's a different story if those instincts push social, while that fervor can engorge itself in the shade of not needing to be openly - or even consciously - justified.

In previous editions of this, I quipped about *The Promised Neverland*, an anime I had never watched with a maybe-Heir named Norman. He goes off the deep end later, and, the notion stuck with me. A hypothetical, an estimation, though still nothing I had seen in reality. Not, at least, to that point. Still, it did get stuck in my head.

Now, I can more definitively gesture to The Immortal of *Invincible*. Mark Grayson himself can get pretty pushy for a Prospit Heir, but it's the Derse one in his supporting cast who gets the closest to looking Lord-like. He's an entertaining fiction, at least - and man, sometimes it's easier to focus on those fictions, and not all the other broken memories.

Faux-Lord Heirs may as well not be called Heirs anymore. Far from the you-got-the-wrong-guy humility, these Magicians believe their performance devoutly...and it's gotten a lot less convincing because of it. Patiently patronizing, charismatically careless, amicably arrogant; for as much as Heirs always think themselves babysitters, it's usually not this obvious they see everyone around them as infants. While still supportive, it can feel (and be) insincere, coddling others while not trusting them with any responsibility. This Heir won't budge on anything they've got personal stake in, marking territory through arguments and dictating the terms for others. They've spent their whole life tiptoeing around people (though likely only **had** to during the childhood that made them Heirs), and this sensation of freedom can give a sense of righteousness that will bulldoze through the concerns of friends who suddenly feel like *they* have to tiptoe now. Maybe there really *isn't* a way to go back to how things used to be, but using Mage gut intuition as "I'm right about everything and never need to investigate and everyone will either come around or can shove off" is *not* the only possible outcome. For what it is though, it's understandable to confuse them with Lords, but there are still discrepancies. First, they don't cry; Lords fall back on appeals for pity as readily as they boast, but while Heirs might see still themselves as an underdog, they don't need validation-through-waterworks. Two, while they can get pretty rant-worthy on how "amazing their brain is" and all these "great ideas they have", that's the Mage talking - most of their strength, the weight they throw around, is still impersonal greater facts/common knowledge. They are, deep down, still Heirs; being a Tyrant is a choice.

LifeHeir and I aren't talking anymore.

Let me be clear that the above paragraph is not exclusively airing dirty laundry; it is influenced by the tail-end of our friendship, but also from the Heirs I've known first and secondhand (and at least one Mage), correlating those stories and seeing shades of the brewing potentials. Sometimes, I prefer to point to fiction just because it's cleaner than the actual drama it rhymes with. While I won't go over everything that happened between us, I'll say this: guy was absolutely convinced Payday 2 had some invisible statistic that was making the Bulldozer enemy target him, even when he took off the Muscle perk deck. He would not let go of that even when I showed him the Long Guide, while he drew a line in the sand for me being anything but completely on his side. If that sounds like a stupid thing to lose a friendship over, I couldn't agree more. I'm just spiteful enough to immortalize his misplaced arrogance, amidst everything I still miss about him.

Like I said all the way back on the Inversion page, there's merit in contemplating the double-Inverse; in that an Heir's pent-up Mage side can burst out with Lord force, even though it's still Mage arguments. Lords, again, may be *clumsy* in their selflessness, but they do kind of *aim* it in a more gentle fashion that's reminiscent of Heirs, often moreso than their actual Inversion. As is the quirk of Classpects, it all makes a wonderful narrative - of would-be rulers fighting for their people. It's why I think "King/Queen" should be seen as an optional Class name, marking someone who really is the de-facto figurehead of their particular circle. Lords have the capital (self-assurance), and Heirs have the magic touch (therapist compulsions), but neither are innately - it must be won, it must be chosen, and there's still no guarantee it'll do any good. The Chosen One might seem the clear pick compared to the Baron, but they're both only human. We all are. For good, ill, and the shifting definitions of either.

Sometimes, it feels like the best quality in a leader is not wanting to be one in the first place - that the person on a throne should be someone who never sees it as anything but another chair (which is certainly Heirs at their best). If life is all thrones to you, all status and heirarchy, then it's far too easy to get caught in the trap of thinking the biggest one will save you...but, if you go at it like that, the smallness follows you. Everyone else, the people looking to you, the people you promised to help, they all look bigger. Louder. Like a threat.

One thing leads to another and you start executing peasants.

DISCREPANCIES CONT: DISCREPRINCES (QUIT SQUIRMING)

Princes and literally fucking anything are a major problem. They're constantly trying ("trying") to reinvent themselves, they're inherently oppositional, and they hate people putting words in their mouth...so, we're not off to a great start here. If any of them have made it this far, they've already got some Strong Opinions on everything said; if you know one in your life, trying to broach the subject secondhand will still probably rub them the wrong way. Being a Prince is hard, and hearing that shitty things they've done in the past isn't something they can distance to "younger phases" is something of an existential terror to them. Claiming to be another Class is usually code for wishing they *were* another Class, and you know what? You're almost there. It's just easier to break the cliches of Princehood if you know what they are, and can admit when you stumble. It's not all bad you know, you can just be a "Good Prince", there is such a thing...but any hesitation felt to trying is a lot of the reason you don't hear about those, compared to the horror stories.

I know a Prince who fought me years on whether he was one or not; a big problem was I didn't have a firm enough description. No joke, that helped convince me to write this a lot more than I kinda want to admit. Bit selfish, isn't it? I mean "bettering people via conflict and competition" is a valid translation of my Classpect, but is it still unbecoming for a Page? Hang on, let me cover my ass...

Princes and Pages hold no related components, but they are both the most outwardly unstable of Active Classes. They both struggle with who they are, justify cruelty, agonize over their principles, and flirt with absolutes they're nervous to back up. Of course, "apologizing compliance while learning from those they look up to" is *very* situational for Princes, usually only manifesting during teenage years. Pages themselves taking on Prince cliches of being uppity, judgmental elitists is usually something toyed with in adulthood, in the (dubious) conclusion that their ideal self ought to do so. Even without factoring in age, it's important to understand that the damage both Classes carry is in completely different areas: beliefs so heavy they crush the spirit, and beliefs too brittle to feed it. A Page's beliefs are rock solid, and their vulnerability comes from not living up to it - which is to say, uppity Pages actually *are* feeling up to snuff. While it's unlikely cruelty isn't revenge from an ex-punching bag, it's equally unlikely that it isn't also (rationalized as) an effective motivator; a Page's central motive never strays from helping others as much as themselves, naked contempt

notwithstanding. Princes are hyper-specific and fickle towards whatever they genuinely believe in, with superiority the *usual* method to appease anxiety. Aloof nihilism, professionalism, quoting a million philosophers you never heard of, bombarding arguments with mocking laughter, all of that is optional strategies to hide their vulnerable heart. Faux-Page Princes haven't made it that far yet, or simply never "succeeded" through those means - which can make this innocence liable to flip to cruelty when they smell blood in the water, chasing more traditional Prince superiority. They have far more in common with Thieves, just as Pages have far more in common with Maids and Lords - no Class is *inherently* a jackass.

While certain media archetypes match to Classpects rather well, "awkward nerd" isn't one of them. You'll have to disentangle some mental stereotypes to sort through them.

Look, just because you're a hopeful dreamer who's weirdly threatened by the people you're trying to help, that doesn't mean your dreams are inherently worse, or that you need to always shit on them; theatricality, self-deprecation, and rallying cries are only cliches of Pagehood, and not exclusive. Princes will find life far easier if they learn to laugh at themselves, and reach more people by displaying all those little fragile hopes and dreams. Still, while this shows one way to even out a Prince's rough edges, it's an intentional reassembly of instinct rather than a default - a Prince has to let off the gas and stop breaking their ideals, where a Page just has to learn to take responsibility and control of their compulsive optimism. This isn't to say Pages can't go off the deep end, but it's certainly a completely different one compared to Princes.

In a perfect world, they'd compliment each other - if a Page ever goes too far, a Prince reels them in. If a Prince is too pessimistic, a Page counters with optimism. The truth is that Pages and Princes are EXCEEDINGLY likely to engage in codependence; Pages are trying to make sense of the world, and might believe someone claiming to have "all the answers". Everytime the Prince falters or feels sullen, the Pages do anything and everything to cheer them up...and anytime the Page starts getting uppity and talking back, Princes put on the pressure, stalling a Page's development. Thieves are the second most likely to try this shit, but they're also not as good at it - even in Homestuck proper, Tavros shook himself loose from Vriska faster than most.

Faster than me, anyways.

Princes and Thieves are separated by a notch - if it were a gradient, we likely wouldn't be talking about it. Now Prospits are pretty easy to parse: even if those Thieves try to be supportive, they're far too curt in the process, and more honest about being self-driven and self-oriented. Thieves gravitate to "look out for number #1" philosophies, after all...but a *Derse* Prince is capable of making the same claim. Self-aggrandizing "team-asshole" is almost the exclusive mask of *Derse* Thieves, so what separates a Prince if they want it? At a surface glance, it's hard to tell; there's a difference in scale, but gloating about being a "survivor" or a "savant" isn't very clear cut. They are responses to their own misfiring Inversions, of a world that either restricts or suffocates the "suckers" not smart enough to

keep ahead. They will both cave eventually, but sometimes, you don't have time for that.

Really look at Lil' Hal. If you had to *imagine* a Derse Thief of Heart, how far off would he be? The sass alone.

There *is* a catch in how they provide alternatives - which is to say, Princes often don't. Derse Princes gloat in pessimism, Prospit Princes solemnly brood, all while Thieves gleefully fight for glory past all the muck. Princes do alot to prove they're "above" their Aspect, but as we've repeatedly discussed, that's never *quite* true; it's Thieves who take the selfish approach transparently, never tied up in admitting what they belong to and what they take pride in. Princes will want to skew things their way as much as Thieves, but there really is something unique about wanting to blow it to smithereens first - or at least, saying you are, while sparing what benefits you. Regardless of whether the Aspect is written off as "elusive", "poisonous", or "volatile", regardless of whether they'll say out loud "except to me", Princes still instinctively engineer a web of complex multi-layered justifications to shy away from what they have to gain, and how truly personal it always was. Remember, this isn't inevitable predation and evil: this is still just someone very awkward at admitting what they like, and these misdirections are to rig the argument so that no one can take it away from them...because it always *feels* like they will. The bluster, the excuses, the cries for forgiveness, all of it is just drama to avoid the mundane self-sabotage they put themselves (and anyone around them) through. Here's a straight up fact: Thieves can conditionally share their primary Aspect, and so can Princes, even if it's got alot more conditions. Neither has to exclusively rely on the heavy-handedness of their Passive side, as that only hurts their relationships and continues the selfish misfires. Sure, there's a fun comparison to make of bandits and politicians, and which one will screw you over honestly...but they *both* can do *more* than screw people over.

You will never have to slap a Thief in the face and say "Fine, you don't like furies and stupid people and easy modes in video games, will you *shut up about it?*". Princes like punching bags too much. Gets gross in excess - or, at all, depending on the person.

Princes and Knights are identical in the bullet points Princes prefer: stubborn selflessness, shouldering burdens, the bravado of a brave-face, silent commitments, and a well of buried self-pity. They are, however, two steps removed no matter how you slice it...it's just that Princes keep trying to narrow those steps. Prospit Princes will lean into this comparison unless they've gotten *really* hooked on hierarchy, and may still confuse the two without understanding how mutually exclusive it all is. Derse Princes, meanwhile, are prone only to paint a knightly picture after their bluster breaks, making it often more a confession rather than a consistent persona - and if it *is* consistent, it's one that snaps to something else under strain or time. The thing is, they're still not actual Knights, and not even because their behavior is more conditional; too pushy to play lackey, measured

towards praise (instead of “scornful” or “comedically egomaniacal for a bit”), overvigilant, managing other people’s lives instead of taking orders, thinking they can fix (not just complain about) everyone else’s problems... isn’t this familiar? Some Princes might chalk this up to learning lessons, becoming “wiser” and “more mature” Knights, but there’s a much simpler answer staring them in the face: they’re just depressed Sylphs. Congrats, you discovered Inversion.

The biggest Prince-flag is that they’re not obnoxiously flirting with all their friends, trying to get a rise out of them. Even a gay Prince is equivalent to one straight Knight.

It’s the most common miscommunication for Princes - you’re allowed to help your friends without deciding it’s your one and only personality trait. Some of that might be from being double-inverted, but the rest is probably from romance. Hurting yourself to help someone else is...overhyped.

Alright, fine, what’s the harm? Inversion’s healthy, right? Sure, sure, but not if you don’t invert the Aspect with it. Princes playing Knights (or, again, brooding-and-tough-Sylphs) are often still trying to work with their primary Aspect, which becomes increasingly fragile after being stretched out as the “universal problem solver” it never was. Princes are stuck accepting only pyrrhic victories in a constant state of stress and unease, rationing out their own carefully approved beliefs which still benefit the Prince whether they realize it or not. On the other hand, a Knight getting uppity and trying to revel in an Aspect meant for everyone else is an oil and water situation. Despite pride, Knights think of other people as the exemplars of their Aspect, and cannot stabilize the revulsion of pretending otherwise. Despite responsibility, Princes will always represent what strengths of their Aspect they deem permissible (and those they don’t), struggling to admit when it benefits them and struggling more to make it benefit anyone else. Both too often ignore the solutions available until they crack, thinking they’ve abandoned their principles when they just dusted off the backups. Figure it out, be happy, and don’t fetishize your sadness.

Both the Striders sure, but it’s more common than you think. I’ve met too many Princes who get *extremely* possessive towards some of their connections; ever fretful of who could hurt them, ever paranoid that someone will. It’s cost me some friendships, but I’ve been on the other side of the arrangement. Even on a good day, it means a lot of codependent alienation from the rest of the world...and on a not good day, with a not great Prince, it’s being manipulated away and isolated from everyone else you care about in your life.

Bleh. Same Sylph shit, but more self-righteous.

Princes and Sylphs are the same Class, congrats, do you want a cookie? Hopefully, a Prince acting more explicitly like a Sylph should be a mark that *they are a Prince*, but I suppose one may suggest they’re a true Sylph with only a Prince Inverse. Make no mistake, the line never blurs to the point of being indistinguishable: the world’s most proudly self-driven Sylph and the world’s most optimistically helpful Prince will, still, always, eternally, young or old, default to their most comfortable state without upkeep. Learn both sides of yourself, invoke as appropriate, but don’t get uppity because there

is a limit to flattery here - being stuck with these impulses doesn't mean being stuck as all you are, and complaining isn't going to change anything. Get introspective. Reconciling who you are, who you could be, who you want to be, there are only positives there.

There's Derse Princes who can display a very awkward enthusiasm sometimes - I touched on it briefly, but the truth of it is, it's *very* similar to the mannerisms of a Derse Sylph. Prospits on either side seem too wound up with their self-perceptions, but...I dunno. Princes are dorks sometimes, and their best qualities come through the brightest when they are. It just rarely sticks. I hope it can.

Princes and Mages don't have much in common, but limitations in descriptors too easily confuses Mage traits and Prince aspirations. I mean if a Mage accepts their Aspect even if it's kind of shit for them, and a Prince breaks down their Aspect into fragments, you're kind of left with the same general amount of unsable information - in theory. In practice, Princes have what they have at the cost of rejecting everything else, making sweeping statements on a multitude of different topics they're rarely qualified to make. Mages keep it simple (or at least make it sound that way), and anything grand is simply the collateral of what seemed, to them, immediately sensible. Whether or not Mages are tapping into anything grandiose, let alone if they're able to admit it, they're still unlikely to suggest *famine*; if they're doing it alone, it's because they feel no one else has caught up to them, and not that no one else can be trusted. Even defensiveness can be a tell, where an arrogant Mage simply *ignores* criticism against them, but Princes are compelled to address and dismantle every snub. There's some important differences between "someone who doesn't care", and "someone desperately trying to prove to anyone looking how much they don't care"...though, not much of a difference in how insufferable *either* can be.

"Magic Scientist" and "Scientist who Fights Magic" can be confusing metaphors to put next to each other, but that's probably why Princes are called Princes - scientist is just a common enough rationalization, in both life and that damned comic, that I personally chose to work it into the prose. Besides, the metaphor is secondary to the brain chemistry.

Follow up: why the hell would a Prince want to be known as a Mage anyways? The Heir impulse of a Mage is often woefully malnourished, and their ability to stand idle to suffering is well documented. Princes have a Sylph inside them that's significantly more difficult to keep quiet, where trying to feign indifference hurts everyone. How much is it really worth to *pretend* you don't care? And how much preventable tragedy will a Mage permit, because they think it the way of the world? Even if they reach out and get burned, even if they're overprotective and stifle others, at least a Prince's guilt compels them to scrutinize their actions - give up most days, but the opportunity to change and learn is present. Mages are not *nearly* as self-critical, and may only redirect themselves as much as is the bare minimum - not what's requested, not what's needed, nowhere close to what's possible. Still, it's ultimately up to both of them, on their own terms,

if they want to change. Perhaps all this entry serves is to let others identify the two.

There's a lot of fictional Mages who might lean Princey but are really just the rare variant of Mage that's gone fucking bananas. Aiden Pearce of Watch Dogs is *reviled* by a good chunk of the gaming community, but I remember showing the E3 demon to a lovely friend of mine who responded with "He even walks the same way I do." Having played the game through, I can say he's an excellent example of the worst kind of Mage, to the point I've joked he's the evil version of my friend...who has still seriously considered vigilante activity, to be fair. Mostly a teenage thing for him. But he was serious, at the time, and it never truly went away. We fought about that once. I'm not what stopped him, I'll tell you that.

Princes and Seers run into the same issues as the Mage comparison, but maybe less obviously. Personal Adaptation and Passive Attunement are a match, but to boil it down to lectures and self destruction misses everything else. Princes are Princes, and avoiding authority is usually because they don't see an opportunity to assert any yet. Seers can be firm, cynical, hurtful, self-sabotaging, driven, but if they *do* have anything to gain then it's rarely anything more drastic than convenience; "getting the word out" isn't just enough, it's *ideal*. Princes need validation, titles, pats on the back, some sense of superiority, and it still won't stop them from making far too much a competition when it never was, never had to be, and isn't favouring them anyways. Even with all this to the side, Seers are (usually) honest when they're making a guess or need more data; you need to *really* press a Prince for them to stumble into admitting they don't know what they're talking about. which is a firm failure state for them. If they're decently modest, they'll just grumble and quiet down - if they think they've got reputation at stake, they'll flail around and insult people in a desperate effort to not lose ground (which ironically still makes it worse). Really, the crux of this is that when it comes to personal vulnerabilities and pain...well, for Seers, that's all smothered Witchisms getting in the way of their points. For Princes however, those wounds are the point; their personal stories are that of being the spurned iconoclast warring against the tide of ignorance, retaliating with answers and - more importantly - judgement. Being "smart" isn't a Class, and neither is being "right"...but being a Prince often means obsessing over such things, to every predictable disaster that ensues.

Rose and Kankri had bite, but it should be clear enough how far they are from Princehood. I've found male Seers to be a bit grumpier, where Witchy-ness seems further from their immediate instincts or self-perception. Then again, that's on this side of the pond; a friend of mine recommended this anime to watch together, and while I can't remember the name, one character fit for Seer with so much more mischief than you'd usually see for a self-identifying dude. Course, I just don't have the sample pool to really investigate those cultural differences - it's just a character from a show, which may or may not reflect internalized potentials of self-expression.

I CAN say that SpaceWitch has a Seer friend, and that the both of them recognized they had similar brains long before I came around with my pseudo-science. Guy was the usual basket of Seer traits...but, then came out as trans rather recently. According to SpaceWitch, her friend jumped right into Witch mannerisms with enthusiasm (without knowing about this bullshit, mind you), and it's fascinating to me that it all got uncorked so suddenly. I maintain that even the most stern Seers, regardless of gender, will all express a Witch side somewhere somehow...but, it's still a Class where all of its most *recognizable* qualities are associated with femininity. I hope, despite my biases to destruction, I'm not out of line to suggest it doesn't have to be, and that we may be better off with new perspectives.

Oh, and don't get me started on Princesses....

Princes and Maids are driven (usually), impatient, and doing their best to fix everything they see as wrong with the world. They're both generally pretty skewed on what's actually in front of them, as besides the pizazz of **creation** and **destruction**, they are ultimately capable of both. While ostensibly more "reasonable" (or at least "dry"), a Prince's idea of "practicality" is influenced by their Sylph touch, and you can follow that thread in their speeches to notice their heaviest hand only being thrown at *other* people. The clearest cases of this is in abusing authority, as while Maids may be ruthless in a position of power, they can't stop themselves from keeping their hands as busy as possible, still mistrusting others to "get it done right". If a Prince is administrating, expect idle hands between their gloating - and while it will have more smiling rationalizations to justify it, it's worth noting Sylphs are capable of that same taskmaster thrill. Of course, whether we're talking a business, a sports team, or an MMO raid group, we are assuming these two Classes at the head of said operation, which is no guarantee. Ultimately, you can boil so much down to Maids being the impulsive one who will bulldoze through you in an argument they don't care to have, while Princes are fatalistic and too caught up trying to make you agree with them or feel stupid for not doing so.

I am keeping my eyes out for an AFAB Princess, or an AMAB Maid (butler?). Princes, however, are not an unbiased source in finding one.

Princes and Bards were already close due to being Paired Classes, but a Bard's refusal to be classified and a Prince's refusal to be classified as a Prince exasperate the issue into some tricky camoflaug. In both, sway determines alot: Prospit Bards are very unrestrained with rambling questions, but Prospit Princes always take a serious tone shift when they need to make a point (which is often). Derse Bards have an enthusiasm for incessant and politically incorrect sadism, whereas Derse Princes have rules on what can and cannot be said (even if they change to reflect personal vendettas) - in short, Derse Princes will explain why you're wrong for not laughing, whereas Derse Bards don't explain anything and continue with the same joke (which may contain slurs). The Royals both need other people, but Bards don't seem to understand they do, where Princes are terrible at hiding their lonely desperation. A Prince can pretend to be a clown on their terms, but they've got too much fight to be pushed around and ignored like one - even if they try.

Princes and Lords are very disparate in ingredients; **destroying** an Aspect with skepticism and **commanding** it as living dogma are almost complete opposites, really. Yet, despite a hundred states of anxiety beforehand, some Princes really do think the best thing they can do is be *louder*, aggressively trying to overpower everything in their way, boldly saying that only they truly know what a valid interpretation of their Aspect

is (which is still potentially “absolutely nothing”). The two Classes have instabilities from different sources, but it can be difficult to tell when there’s so much dick-measuring and boasting clogging up the useful data. Now it’s the Prospits who irrefutably prove this as two different Classes, as the unrestrained, almost childlike optimism of those Lords is a stark contrast to the moodier patience of a Prospit Prince. While they may yearn for a Lord bravado, it’s a pretty unwieldy mask to wear...but, Derse Princes, as we’ve established, *love* masks, and they can hurt a lot of people while they do it. If they’re your only examples of a Prince, you might be forgiven thinking they’re the same Class as Lords, but the cracks are everywhere a Prince doesn’t want you to look.

“Ruler”! HAH! CALLING YOU OUT CARL JUNG, FUCKING AMATEUR HOUR

Okay yeah, Hussie noticed it first, but it’s still fun to laugh at dead old people who are scared of communism. That and whatever Homestuck fan (I *think* I remember, but I’m genuinely not sure) had a see saw where “Princes and Bards” lead into “Lords”. Jesus, they modeled the WHOLE THING over “masculine aggression” and “female compassion”. That’s such a fucking gross oversimplification, and I’m triply pissed off that “Time” is seen as some inherently evil Aspect to them. Look, I can’t make this any clearer: “toxic masculinity” is not a Class.

Let’s ignore the rudeness for a second and look internal: a Prince with this much heft is putting all their faith in their destructive impulse, doubling-down on sneering and spite. Their Aspect is under their control only by virtue of a violent stranglehold, which means it’s a depressing series of conclusions that sound like “No it’s impossible and only an idiot would try” and “It’s the weakness of all humans and only I am smart enough to see through it, unlike you”. Yet, it’s the Sylph impulse that’s doing the heaviest lifting, giving form and direction to the remaining Aspect dwelling in this philosophy, **creating** paths forward for anyone and everyone around them. It’s hard to even tell what *doesn’t* count as a misfire here, but it’s worth noting the catch: Tyrant Princes are still very helpful, involved, and looking to other people for validation. Now usually that’s after or during shitting on anyone who tries something (that the Prince didn’t suggest), fostering and exploiting dependencies as their only close relationships. It’s just pretty noticable that, past all their bluster, they’re hugely dependent on an audience, and think the best way to prove that is to do something for them. It’s noticable that, past all their constant criticism, they can dish it out but can’t take it, always inventing excuses on the spot. They have a few talents they hype up as much as possible, and if you’ve got something better - let alone *overtake* them - they will throw an honest to god tantrum. Trying to match a Lord’s aggression doesn’t make them stronger; it only makes them more fragile, terrified, desperate, and broadcasts that to everyone in their radius.

It’s not the best that Princes can be. It’s just what makes the most sense to them. The most natural. I suppose that’s why “Ult-Dirk” is the way he is. It’s...accurate.

Insecure Lords? Yeah, sure, crying and clinging to your leg, begging you to give them what they couldn’t get by demanding it aggressively. Dismissive?

Don't expect a fancy argument caked in math and philosophy, compared to just calling you a faggot. Pragmatic? Sure, but generally pretty enthused about sharing the technique. Cynical? To anything besides their place in the universe: be it golden god, or just a middle-aged fart who doesn't need a reason not to worry. Princes playing Lord, in all the boisterous swagger, the center of the room attention, the "charismatic genius"...just, can't keep it going. When Lords break down, "self-aggrandizing" swaps to "self-pity" while they still do what they wanted to do in the first place - but for Princes, it's a hundred flavours of backtracking. Maybe someone called them out loudly enough, and now they're scared it's no longer socially acceptable to bully someone; that they'll downplay anything that came out of their mouths, formally insisting it really wasn't ever meant that way (**it was**). Maybe they're drunk, admitting they're frauds and apologizing to everyone they tried to bully into being their friend - that they always knew on some level it was wrong, sure, but blah blah childhood blah blah life is hard and no one understands. Even Prospit Princes come close to a realization they're making things worse by overtrusting their instincts, but it's so difficult to get any kind of Prince to do something about it. If they stop acting like a Lord, they'll just reinvent themselves again, but at least that proves they never were one in the first place.

I have (or, had) the pleasure of knowing a Lord of Void. It's interesting finding someone who says "nothing matters" as a good thing, often accompanied by "I also do not matter". I did wind up pushing him a bit too far...I still say he swaggers about too much, faults people for initiating arguments while expecting his statements to go unchallenged. I put on enough pressure to hear him make his points, and they sure as hell weren't enough for me...but, they were enough for him. I've seen Princes argue, and he ain't one. There's "Would fall apart if he was proven wrong in an argument" and "Doesn't realize he's capable of losing an argument".

Things ended up going too far when he was busy trying to claim cancel culture is a problem because his brother had an incident, and there was no other evidence besides that...just a bit of conjecture, but, it didn't really go further than the anecdote. Why would it? He's a Lord. I actually miss the mental gymnastics Princes get into; there's effort in those, and a spectacle. There was some other stuff too, but, I shouldn't vent. The purpose of these little slices of my experience is just to articulate particulars of Class interactions and cliches. Your own experiences matter more than me, and I hope you all keep a look out - I'll probably make more sense when you're *done* reading this document.

Princes and Heirs are...I mean...like...we're all seeing the obvious storytelling significance here, right? Princes always veer towards an image of a powerful and respected strategist friend-leader, and Heirs are the Class that keeps stumbling into that, frequently (though not always) refusing to admit it. It should be a pretty clear tell that Princes like to leave their signature on things, and purposefully trying to avoid that results in the heavy-handed not-quite-martyrdom we discussed in the Knight comparison. Still, Prospit Princes can come close to an Heirs even-handed subtlety if they try their best, and that is worthy of some praise; Derse Princes may have more overlapping ground with the dark path of stern authority that Derse Heirs dance around. In both cases, there's a discussion of the people we grow into, rather than the archetypes we start as, but we're here to have the argument of sorting the two; in the doomed effort to achieve perfection,

who is the iconoclast and who the illusionist? With the descriptions given, Heirs could still see their worst habits in the Prince section, as Princes could see shimmers of who they are in Heirs...but whatever is built stands atop the same fundamentals. In this regard, the easiest way to tell them apart is simply to have known them earlier in life, and seen which traits were displayed better; it gets more complicated if that isn't an option.

Heirs and Princes do share phases: shy and underestimated, broken-soul resignation, over-protective older sibling, and the control freak almost-authority whose cynicism to their Aspect vexes their attempts to "get it right". So much of what was said in Faux-Lord Heirs is relevant here, but from someone leaning on ruthlessness more than confidence; Heirs can become transparently argumentative and irritated, with an Aspect they no longer truly believe in anymore. They'll push through all the concerns of their friends and family, paranoid to all possible dangers, while nothing is ever quite good enough for them to stop stressing themselves out. Of course, what's going on here is that their twitchy fingers have gone into overdrive: their Aspect is in a permanent state of **change**, a burdensome societal obligation of constant maintenance, with perfection eternally elusive. If that sounds smug, you are correct: Heirs will do it "for you", but there's *always* been a pride in assuming no one else is qualified to run their own lives, which is only getting increasingly less quiet. Alongside this infantilizing and undermining, Heirs are still the "sticky" debaters they always were, but they still don't ask for much besides agreement. Their concern is that you don't hurt yourself, where your best place is on the sidelines looking pretty. If Heirs actually *lead*, it is by example, but trusting others to keep up with them is trusting them to not have differences of opinion too. The doubts, guilt, and self-loathing can pile up high, but again, Heirs don't cry - only cut their losses and keep at it. Draw as many myths as you want of the rightful Heir surplanting the bastard Prince, but the fact is, diligence isn't mutually exclusive with being a manipulative asshole - really, it just makes them harder to get rid of.

Originally, I put the DCAU Superman in for Prospit Princes. I no longer maintain that position - certainly not with certainty. It's depressing though; without him, the bar is back to the low standard of Zebruh. I could think of a few other fictions, but, just as likely the writers didn't mentally sort the traits from the two different personalities - which is, by itself, not a requirement for writing good stories with good characters. Sometimes, fiction is so much more straightforward.

Perhaps it's a dead horse to reiterate every way Princes will identify themselves through unpleasantness. We should at least not forget where this is all coming from: the Sylph side hyper-exaggerates the outside world, misfired into a cataclysmic quagmire of wrong options, wrong lifestyles, and wrong opinions; casualties of a world without their judgement, so get used to disappointment. Thing is, Princes just aren't "built" to correct the world like Heirs (or even Bards); their primary Aspect is a personal one, eking out happiness outside the influence of the oppressive, unchangeable inverted

Aspect. The Prince impulse will promote a mask of an individual capable of navigating this minefield, but not one who can actually overcome it - not when they're unconsciously **creating** more "dangers". Like Thieves, Princes express themselves through subversions and exceptions, and less firm principles (ironically). They are often tender when saying this honestly - not sneering at refusing to save the world, but imploring their loved ones to "escape" with them, away from the hardship and haters who could never understand. This can be sweet, just as much as it can be a suicide pact (sometimes literally); Princes have always been prone to romanticize spirals and resignations, and this is often the sum of those hypocrisies we've gone over so much. It doesn't *have* to be, but it still won't make this personal Aspect any kind of fuel to the fire they want. Those boldest displays of authority - corrupt or otherwise - will always reflect compromises, invocation, or outright acceptance of their inverted Aspect...which is to say, it's not really Princes that are leaders, but Sylphs.

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Let's be blunt: it's not fair. None of this is fair. Nobody asks for their Classpect, but the dangers in Princes are so much more default than deviation. It's easy to see Heirs as just "better", but that's disregarding more than a little cultural worship of that particular archetype, and those particular traits: selfless, resilient, headstrong, humble. Primarily, Princes are built to reject convention ("**destroy**"), but if they don't make their own meanings, societal expectations leak in anyways from the Sylph's mythmaking, only making the tangle of identity worse (and there is SO MUCH to say about the heavy feminine coding of Sylphs, and how Heirs have been made a facet of the masculine ideal, along with the default "good guy" of fiction, etc etc). Heirs themselves are often strangled by an eternal crusade to better the world at the cost of themselves - and Princes are not that. They are the Class of "me and mine", of cutting losses, of salvaging and retiring when cataclysm looms on the horizon...and sometimes, it very much is. Sometimes, Princes are the voice in the room (official leader or not) that really *can* make the hard decisions that the dogmatic are ignoring. What really matters is asking themselves if they *want* be that guy. Princes are a lot of things - disappointed perfectionists, contrarian auteurs, resigned hermits - but they are, just like Witches and Thieves before them, themselves. Figuring out who they are and what they stand for is a long process, prone to relapses and collapses, but the less they hinge everything on what other people think about it (good or ill), the more likely they'll find something comfortable. Probably. At the end of the day, it's their life, and there's only so much a personality document can and should do in regards to changing their mind.

Like I said, calling a Class a "King" is just...I don't know, I like to think of it as "resident social groups focal figure and meme". You could do that with any Class, you know? These are all just words surrounding people - what actually matters to you?

I like to think that the best version of *any* Class is the ability to own up to your own belief structure, recognizing it's an illusion, and arguing it's merit regardless - better than projecting or assuming. Heirs and Princes both avoid that: Heirs barely realize what they're doing, and Princes failing to understand their conniptions aren't universal. One too modest (or just convinced they are), the other too wound up - hence the names. None of them mean good or evil, and it's futile to waste everything worrying about what is or isn't "ideal".

You know what Princes do that no one else can do? What I truly respect about them? They can hit wildly unexplored parts of their Aspect, and express something totally unique, out there, and thought provoking - like a Bard, but with scheduling. It's as soon as they stop trying to protect themselves, piss other people off, gaslight others, as soon as you GIVE ALL THAT UP...there's actually a decent conversationalist I like watching movies or creating stories with. I always miss the banter with Princes in my life - and they probably *can* make that their defining feature, if they get the fuck over themselves.

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Okay. We've established what Classes are and aren't, in a suitable amount of detail. The totality, the irrefutable, the deviations, the potential, all of it. We set the boundries well enough to discuss those that (appear to) cross them freely.

One last dance.

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HERALDS

(PARADOXES, PLASTICS, PHILISTINES)

The reason someone can be a "destroyer" for their whole lives is that they can't actually completely remove what they're fighting - or rather, "fix". Remember that Princes and Bards both wish to rewrite these ideologies, and some of the difficulty admitting that is because it's not *absolutely*. Their ideological interpretations are highly subjective, at their worst when pretending not to be, but wobble back and forth on their sanctity and substance. This, however, is the step past that: no more debating, no more hesitation, just one fixed point of subjectivity so rarely admitted as such. All the certainty of the Master Classes, but a belief Adapted almost beyond recognition: **conquered**. The myth tied *only* to precisely what needs to be rationalized in the moment, as freeing as it is dangerous. Yet, too easily these contortions do not inspire the wielder as much as others; languishing is the most natural outcome, an immovable object to a Master's unstoppable force. It can feel lonesome to be deaf to that music while everyone else dances...or better this way, to shut out the noise and focus on practicality. In manuscript, prose, or decree, a mute passion still burns - at risk of the parchment. To remember an Aspect that died, to rally the cause of killing it, to deny it ever was, to warn or welcome its wrath - a penstroke each. The unjustified whimsy, the unjustifiable cruelty, the subtle beauty above such squabbles entirely - just the way things are.

Some people think I only did all this because I'm just not creative enough to stretch the existing 14 classes over people. Some people think it's just everyone I hate. Some people think

I'm just dramatic. And hey - they might be right. I'm the lunatic who thinks Hussie struck something from the record. I'm just *also* the lunatic who's going to bust my chops trying to prove it.

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HERALDS CONT: IDENTIFICATION (AMONG US)

The thing about these two is that they're likely to have verbose ideas on who they already are. With everything established thus far, we can at least *try* to establish what they are or aren't, with some grist to the argument. So, with sincerity, please consider the following:

- 1: None of the Classes thus far have resonated with you.
- 2: Multiple Classes have resonated with you, and the discrepancies section has not helped.
- 3: A Class has resonated with you, but only in certain sections (this is doubly important if you don't see yourself in the unhealthy "ugly sides").
 - 3a: You would argue the reason you only resonate with certain sections is you "matured", "grew out of it", or otherwise permanently silenced selective elements of a Class.
- 4: You were already 100% sure about your Classpect due to a prior experience with the Homestuck fandom, but none of this matches.
 - 4a: You were already 100% sure about your Classpect, but have changed it now/recently to something else that you are 100% sure about.
 - 4b: The new Classpect you are 100% sure about doesn't match the behaviors here either.
 - 4c: The Classes described below DO resonate with you, give you pause for thought, but you rationalize it away as momentary doubts in 30 seconds.
- 5: Assuming you don't have a Class.
- 6: Reading the following descriptions for these two Classes, or this section, and claiming "Everybody thinks like that".
 - 6a: The idea that everyone does not, in fact, think like that, is existentially terrifying.

If enough of these sound familiar, you just might be one of the Classes here.

If you are, but still don't agree with it, we can at least describe them well enough so that outsiders can recognize them. With all this in mind, let's get this show on the road.

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PRIESTS are individuals born into an eternal Tabula Rasa, constantly shifting their moral code and behaviors; entirely different personas over the years, sharp turns week to week, and liable to contradict themselves even within the same conversation. They have a great listless boredom, leaving them prone to low energy and inaction. While some Priests can't summarize

themselves past a shrug, a great many are fixated on their purpose in life. Sometimes this is an insistence (meek or surprisingly defensive) to petty titles, as if the most defining feature of their personality is being a huge enthusiast of greek mythology, some obscure musician, or just...really liking mustard. Other times, this is played with an element of gravitose; trying to “make it big” commercially, to write the Next Great Novel, or reach out to an entire generation and focus mankind to a better world. Unfortunately, 1: Most Priests feel like irredeemable failures for not reaching these titanic heights (even if they got REALLY close (most don’t)), and 2: Priests are *very* easily distracted. Sudden creative sparks (either wildly passionate, or “eh, I wanted to mix it up”) will have them discard the past as they chase a new career, hobby, public persona, or even uproot their entire social circle. Without focus, this often leaves Priests spinning in circles, unable to commit to one direction long enough to actually nurture expertise, or applying expertise long enough to see consistent results. More dangerously, this leaks into their connections, as Priests may dismiss their own transgressions as much as old tastes in fashion. All of these outward and inward rejections reflect someone trying to cultivate their best self: validated in basic existence, worthy of love, and irreplaceable in shepherding any other lost lambs. One can be sympathetic to this chronic emptiness, but still be wary of what they’ll sacrifice to sate it.

I’m about to make a lot of claims. Custom Classes are usually the sign of a Homestuck fan who’s more interested in dumb fun than assuming there’s merit to Hussie’s system - and it’s pretty obvious I think there’s merit. More than that, I’m quite certain there *is* an example of this Class existing in the comic...in fact, you could argue it’s the *only* one.

“Priest” is what I came to eventually. “Lich” was considered, but felt too accusing, too demeaning. “Serf”, for their lack, but that’s just got no flair, and doesn’t resonate with the whole of it. “King” only really works for the truly power-mad, and it’s increasingly unstable given the surprising amount of queer people who qualify...abuse and negligence seem a commonality in their childhoods, so it shouldn’t be a surprise that those are the voices that go unheard the longest. Still, “King”...Hussie did leave that spot open, technically. I’ve made my thoughts clear, but you gotta wonder what they thought - and believe me, they know.

Priests often feel like an insignificant witness, a conduit or beacon to the beauty of the world around them - yet, this isn’t their focus. They’re not that *content* being insignificant, and most take in the light of what’s around them in order to reflect it in whichever direction they want. Now, a Prince’s Aspect is more of a weird abusive relationship, where their constant complaints speak to an unresolved schism, and boasts about being “over it” are a bluff. The better metaphor for Priests is that their Aspect is buried in an unmarked grave on the other side of town, and has remained there for years undisturbed - it’s just not dead. Their Aspect is personally **conquered**, wholly Adapted to the whims, ideals, and comforts of their life alone...and yet, often so buried the Priest themselves can lose track of these motives, or feel the world would reject them for it, making they themselves **conquered** by that Aspect. This dance of extremes is what makes Priests the most *slippery* Class there is, as they can effectively “opt-out” of their Aspect’s most recognizable qualities. It’s still *there*, it’s still bound, but

whatever bubbles at the deep depths of their psyche is easily overshadowed by pop culture, philosophy, amicable charm, or pure flippancy - all more likely to resemble the inverted Aspect, if anything. Dig deep enough, and the Priest impulse is often attached to a lot of ugly: sudden bursts of anger, obsessive longings, simmering resentments, all surrounding a catalytic sore spot. Really, that's what a Priest's Aspect is: their pain, their want, and still the salve to fix it all if they find *their* way to embrace it. It's not going to work the more they want *other* people as idols, or audience, or scapegoats.

"Adaptation" really does translate to "Destruction" sometimes, but I'm not sure Priests are that happy in discontent, you know? Look, Time's my wheelhouse, but I'm a Page born and bred - hyping up reality, the IDEA of reality, is my own delusion, and I've got a Rogue of Space in the back of my head to fill the gaps. Course, if Time's destruction, and Princes are destroyers, ain't it redundant? Now, an actual Prince of Time is...technically Kanaya, following Inversions. I have to imagine Hussie agreed since her turning into a vampire is a pretty clear example of rebuking inevitability. Still. What Princes "do" to their Aspect is leave their mark on it, defy it, get twitchy and refuse to let it be...all Timebound amounts to is seeing that itself as values. Not burning down your hopes and dreams, but dreaming of burning something down - anything, really! And if that's the value, and it's meant to be universal, than as much as you might overthink the time you have left and want more, you respect the PRESSURE it puts on someone, and how we all compete with each other in GLORIOUS CHAOS.

Caliborn is, paradoxically, a very strong believer in anti-belief; a determined artist in regards to anti-art. He altruistically sees harmony in everyone seeking self-interest and competition. I get it. Obviously. A much more deft and self-aware hand is Aradia, who tried to not take things so personally, and has much more restraint in where her talents would do good. But Caliborn is very important, because while Priests aren't Lords of Time, they're comparable. You could see it as an ingredient, and doubly so if we were talking about a Priest of Time. Hypothetically.

The most stable Priests do and say little of substance - either from having a good thing going already, a dry imagination, or such a series of setbacks that they feel beaten into unsalvageable failure. With the ability to be "anything", they can readily choose "nothing"; idly drifting through life, agreeably tagging along to whatever anyone else is doing until they suddenly get bored and leave. Always the outsider, it's very likely they'll be the one to say that no Class mentioned thus far registers, or all of them kinda-sorta from what they bothered paying attention to - but those are threads you can pull on, where even mutability is immutable. Their absolute individuality comes at the price of equally strong ideas about *everything else*, and they won't always be a bystander; ramped up with all the worst rationalizations, Priests can be one of the most terrifying Classes. Again, I insist, plenty of Priests are harmless, but the danger lies in someone who can *always* seem harmless while chasing their dreams of import and legacy. Regardless of the face it takes, Priests can be dangerously manipulative figureheads (of a country, a company, a household, or an internet forum), weaving justifications in a way that leaves everything either for "*your*" benefit or "*your*" fault. Even the ones who would play these fantasies for laughs, or withdraw in penance for dark thoughts, or the blank stare of someone who'd never think of themselves that way, all of those could be distractions from what they'll do when your back is turned and there's a prize on the line...or not, and they're completely fine, and the paranoia is unwarranted, but that's at least to be considered on a person-by-person basis. Priests are tricky people - the trickiest there is - and while there's

room to disagree on judgements, this document can at least do its best to help identify them.

If we're talking media, then depictions of Priests are omnipresent - but ever only as supervillains. Cold, calculating, manipulative, and prone to obsessions with those under them; some deified connection with a person they want to see the world as they do, or to mold in their image, or just to save them from a cold and uncaring world by any means necessary - even if (or especially) their obsession would disagree with those methods. It's a well understood archetype, but what's important is the real people it stems from, and how many of those stories are just someone trying to process a family member or friend who went off the deep end and made it everyone else's problem.

I'm trying to talk real psychology. If I point too long at demonic overlords or friggin Lex Luthor, then even if you trust that I'm not crazy, we can still lose track of what real Priests look like past the luster that our collective fictions has focused on. I'm talking about casual friends, clueless bureaucrats, reclusive transgirls, and so many other people with their own stories to tell. I've been hurt before, fine - hell, I've known *alot* of people who have been hurt, and like with Lords, I will not downplay what Priests are capable of, and what the odds are of it happening. But I still don't want anyone to get confused and just attach an "evil" label. That's the easy answer, and the truth is rarely ever so easy.

Prospit Priests are host to all the darkness just mentioned, but tend to carry themselves in a way that might make you think they just *forgot*. Many style themselves as a jolly eccentric, supportive and loyal...if, predisposed to a certain absent-mindedness. Some become so lost in that fog that nothing gets off the ground, leaving them only "fine"; modest, aimless, laughs at jokes they didn't get, and happy to go with the flow. While perhaps a bit "clingy" to certain people, and tending to have *verbose* opinions on philosophy when the mood catches them, any Prospit Priest can be wholly harmless. Of course, if they start getting *sketchy*, they wind up people who really want things to stay normal; more vocal about which voices feel unpleasant, more insistant about *needing* things to go their way, less and less patience for those that step out of the drawn lines. At this point, their downfall is their own casual honesty: increasingly bitter yet still orbiting the people in front of them, they can say awful things about people not in the room, and break promises they'll deny ever having made in the first place. Their gaslighting is instinctive reflex more than any conscious tactic, where the more they have, the more they want, and the more they will spin doctor *anything* to keep hold of their social group. Or...they're just people with no shtick higher than the latest funny movie they watched. Yes, the docile still have these jagged ambitions buried in there, waiting for opportunity, but none of this is to say that the only road it leads is ruin - backstabbed by someone whose face doesn't even register they're holding a knife. Prospit Priests are surprisingly natural at breaking the inherent deadlock of the Class, finding exactly who they want to be; they just need to have a hard look at themselves, and catch any hypocrisies in how they plan to get there. If they don't, they'll crush the competition in blissful, double-thinking autopilot.

It is difficult to find any fictions that depict Prospit Priests outside of the role of false friend, doomed to betray the trusting, but I do keep looking. Gomez Addams as portrayed by Raul Julia is wonderfully charismatic (Doom, as one would hope of that family), with a positive spin on every characteristic Prospit Priests have - sinister menace included. Should that still count? There's Michael of "The Good Place", who starts as a fake friend and almost immediately slides

into a surprisingly common Priest role of "domesticated villain", and then redeems further into a silly goof. Spoilers, I know, but honestly *recognizing* a Priest Class kind of spoils a betrayal 9 times out of 10. There's Mr. Boss of "Smiling Friends", but there's so much comedic sociopathy there, does it matter he only helps the protagonists? And Kinger, of "TADC"...well, episode 2 is all that's out at time of writing. If he turns out to be evil, there is no justice in this world.

I have met quite a few in reality, and I long for a fiction that gives a positive role model. Many are nice people, and some quite close to me; endearing little creatures you can spritz with a water bottle if they ever get weird on you. Not to say I haven't met horror stories - not to pretend I wasn't raised by one.

I thought my dad was a Lord of Light before, when I started with all this. I was very close. If I've got this right, he's a Priest of Void; one more arrangement of delusion, despite his assertions of uber-rationality. I remember him ranting about how my mother and the government hacked my brain, and that's why I have bad memories about him. I remember so many strange things he told me about the films we watched together, where I can't tell if he was overvaluing his headcanons or just fucking with me. I remember, intimately, him denying ever having put spy cameras in our downtown Vancouver apartment, across the street from a hotel under construction, there in the T-intersection of the hallway under furniture, catching my brother and I playing the Hoth level of Star Wars Battlefront 2 and skipping our homework - which we didn't. We just genuinely forgot.

I made good on sending him this document, but he quickly sent me back a disappointingly routine message wanting to get his hooks back in me - tutor me, push me, direct me, something something neural pathways. When I insisted he actually finish the thing, he went back to the radio silence we'd maintained. I didn't imagine he'd take too kindly to the dirtily laundry I aired, but it seems likely he didn't even read that far. So be it. This was, despite its barbs, an olive branch; an insistence I'm not a sucker, but willing to talk if all the cards are face up. He didn't take. So I'll keep living.

Derse Priests are identifiable most by what makes them so vastly mutable: a crippling emptiness. A darker sense of humour and greater self-awareness makes the Dersites more likely to recognize their ennui next to Prospits. However, their response to this unrest is highly contextual. Some lean into an affable sadism, laughing at how little holds them back, but hoping you laugh too. For others, it's not a joke, but genuine ruthlessness. On the flipside, there are the deeply penitent, guilty to their potential for malice, fearful of ever being left to their own devices. Some others muffle all eccentricity, styling themselves as comfortably numb workaholics. They all want to do something great, but why? For their loved ones? A public good? Immortal fame? Because they're bored? Sometimes ambition isn't embraced or rejected, but fizzles into dead weight, creating a bitter little creature, mad that everyone else seems to have all the luck. All stripes are prone to a deep cynicism, doubting anyone *really* cares about much outside their self-interest; a sentiment expressed either matter-of-factly, condescendingly, despondently, or as preface to a wild idea to "fix" the species. Despite this wide spectrum, it's all the same Class, trying to find a mask that makes the most compelling face - that the one thing they won't accept is being a nobody. However, the fact that they are as suggestible as they are capable of suggestion is an everpresent uncomfortability, not a contextual one like Prospits...so what better proof than leadership to prove they *totally* know what they're doing? Yet, so much harm done by insisting they know *exactly* what you're thinking: "I know you must despise me", "You're too blinded by emotion", or the ever-classic "Can't you see how horribly misguided your views are?". Derse Priests can be better than this, but not if they don't

break the chain; the more they fight to make someone feel helpless, the clearer that reflects their own fears.

If a painful memory just flared up, of how someone treated you and crossed boundaries you never assumed they would, I'm sorry.

If a chill just ran through your bones, and your main concern is that this is an insulting portrait of an irredeemable person, and an inhumane means to damn them by association...then put a pin in that.

It's hard to say what media depictions to point to on this that aren't so villainous it only hurts my case - but if you're imagining them (or know a real one personally), I hope it puts it all in perspective. I've met many and befriended some of them, though I'll never forget one of my oldest and best friends...who, wants nothing to do with me anymore. She was smart. Smart enough to know she was different, but laughed it off as "evil". She saw something familiar in fictions, and presented loud and proud to friends...but she couldn't shake her own irritation at being told to do literally anything she didn't want to. So many wild promises, so many enthusiastic starts, and then a sneer or a shrug when I try to follow through with her, or just ask what happened.

I think I only now realize how hard she tried - but the times she let me down, the times she hurt me to protect herself, the times she told me to shut up for crying under her abuse, will never go away until she apologizes. Which she probably won't. When she hurt me, I lashed back in my own need for justice and got her kicked out of the house we were staying in. I guess I don't really *regret* that (she got all manipulative to my friends in response, which was why I figured she too dangerous to be kept around) but it's weird reconciling potential. Weird thinking she really wasn't lying when she tried to be a good friend all those times; she just, struggled, and needed it argued to her. For what it's worth, she was an incredible author and roleplayer. Smart, good wit. I'll always respect that. Might sound hollow coming from me. Maybe it doesn't matter.

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INVERSION (PRELUDE): As you may have picked up, Priests are the Active Inversion of the Muse Class. The disparity is sharp, but how could it be anything else? Muses are an upper limit of selfless sacrifice, and Priests are the natural counterbalance: ego unbound by the over-saturated prose the Masters drown in. Yet, still adjacent to it, in so much internal conflict: Priests are Muses, and Muses are Priests. The cold spite and lust for praise Muses either dance around or hate themselves for has a name, and Priests themselves carry a jury-rigged Muse impulse: proclaiming an Inverted Aspect's **commands**, but considering themselves above such things, liable to pity mankind's poor predictability. Tis a sweet siren song that they know everything you're thinking of, capable of, and *just* what medicine our species needs. There are Priests out there who behave almost exactly like Muses - just, more professional, and so very, very, very, very, *very* obsessed on deciding who they are. There are also dangerous Priests, who invoke this instinctive language in "Being your most trustworthy, reliable friend who only wants what's best for you" to manipulate people, and try to look smarter than they are. Of every crime they're capable of, please remember two very important facts. The first is that they can very much *be* good people, who either put the worst of themselves behind them, or never even did anything that bad in the first place. The second is that, even in the most sinister supervillain potentials, there are Muses who do all the same things - only quieter.

RIVALRY (OVERDUE): But what is the Priest impulse really? With Muses giving everything to everyone around them, it can be tempting to call it “nothing”, but that’s not accurate, is it? When you squint, it technically doesn’t *have* nothing either; there is, still, an Aspect buried in there, vexing them, and all their shapeshifting doesn’t change the raw volume of what they’re aiming for. It is important to understand Priests as a true Tier 4 Active Class - Rival to Lords, in the **visionary** dreams of how they’d shape the world. They share the ill-advised aspirations of being an invincible ubermench, leading and inspiring through shining example, but wholly different approaches. Where Lords romanticize, but don’t really *disguise* self-interest, Priests either get lost in confusingly roundabout explanations of how their rise to power is totally entirely for selfless reasons, or don’t have much to say beyond a flat “I want it”. Lords are unashamed of anything they produce - be it legitimate talent or a drunken scribble -, but Priests are compelled to tie any project or prose they make to established history, philosophy, or even some nebulous idea of “the people” before it feels legitimate. Lords exude power, and Priests displace it - hence the names. But factoring all this into everything said on Priests spinning in circles, or not even knowing what they want, and you see the problem: they want to reach as high as Lords, but their support beams are all either cheap or loans. When it falls apart - or fails to ever start - it’s easy to just be left feeling like a failure; a mistake; a burden; a **waste**.

To the uninitiated: amongst the listed Classpects, there were a few not taken seriously. Calling Nicholas Cage the “Nick of Time” is, surely, a jest (though I will admit I can’t get a read on the guy). That some unseen figure in a chatroom is a “Gent of Piss” was not something I dwelled on as key intel. Among these, often attributed to Hussie themself but apparently just something that caught on, is “The Waste of Space”. It’s a funny pun. Given Hussie’s self insert being drawn with a Spacebound garb on at some point, and some invocations of “wasting” in their other work, it clearly struck some chord.

I certainly didn’t dwell on the name itself, but it always did nag at me what Hussie themself actually was. For several reasons, I don’t agree with “Waste” as a name - in fact, I think “Space” is misdirection. But amidst my arguments here on what this Class is and isn’t, it’s best to get everyone caught up that it *is, technically*, present in the comic.

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DISCREPANCIES: Priests are complicated enough that one can’t just list a couple Classes they *might* be confused with; they can be confused with every single one. Sometimes this is moment to moment, and sometimes they may resemble one long-term only to shift for a multitude of reasons - even then, their imitations are often a cross stitch of many Classes. Priests muddle the definitions of Classes both in their own automatic shapeshifter behavior, and their own insinuations to their favourite label...yet, they were Priests beforehand, and will be Priests afterwards. More than that, a grim narrative presents itself from these comparisons: “Adaptation” can translate to “the path of least resistance”. Priests imitating Classes are never bound to precisely the same convictions, making them fair-weather-friends more often than not. If the following descriptions sound like “evil doppelgangers”,

it is because it is difficult to describe them otherwise. Discerning them in your day to day life will be a fine line, and sometimes all you've got is a gut feeling that something feels "off", or the actual reveal that someone wasn't who you - and even they - thought they were.

The way Priests latch on to their own headcanons over *everything else* a work has bugs me, but it's ultimately harmless. Identifying themselves, however, is routinely off-center and omitting details, which others can notice. This is thrice as bad for Priests who are familiar with Homestuck, as they're well familiar with the system, likely got into it (for at least a month), and already made a conclusion. It doesn't hurt Hussie never made too bold a stance on it, and Jung's work is only theories. If you don't believe me taking it all too seriously...first, how'd you make it this far? Why did you? But, more importantly, it'd make it all the harder to accept an answer that wasn't (explicitly) in the book to start with.

Classes aren't just empowering - they hurt. They bind us. They are inconvenient, and how we torture ourselves when no one else is around. If it's just "fun" and "sounds cool", you get incorrect answers, and obscure who you truly are. You're not a Witch just because you're a Wiccan (or just think Wiccans are cool), you're not a Bard just because you're detached, you're not a Thief because you like Vriska, you're not a Lord just because it's "the badass Master Class", and you're not none of them because you're "SPECIAL"...but given where they are, and how they're handled in Homestuck, maybe Hussie would say so. I've got no patience for it. They're a type of person, they can be classified, and I'll do it here. And I *will* try to make it something worth holding to. What I said about Princes is more relevant to you than them: if you can't spot yourself, ask a friend. Truth might hurt, but it's a better building material.

PROPHETS: Priests resembling Mages are probably not trying to resemble anything at all, really. Despite the swath of ambitious potentials that we will discuss, Priests can easily embrace Faux-Mage awkwardness, holding strict to the principles that inform their worldview...though, this is a very *different* worldview compared to Mages. All that isolation and unease is a comfortable end point for Mages, where for Priests, it is an uncomfortable stalemate between (their perception of) the outside world's truths and their (very subjective) own. Put plainly, Mages know who they are, but Priests know who everyone else is - or at least, so the inner Muse says, while Priests can roll their eyes at a populace they're convinced is oh-so-predictable. A Faux-Mage Priest is simply not taking any dramatic action towards this schism, or even deciding its a problem to be solved; we tow the line, keep our head down, do what we're ""supposed"" to do, and we are owed a suitable allotment of happiness. Now again, this might *look* Magey at a surface level, but it's really just a Muse worldview at its most monotonic, and that can make the clearest difference their opinion on other people. Mages may not *get* other people, but their Heir side only needs to give a few suggestions and gesture a little, if that. It is a Priest's expectation that people *ought* to be predictable that can run into so many issues when people very much aren't, or that society and human nature are not so coherent as to provide singular, "correct" directives. Mages (ostensibly) know what works for them, and deify that into a righteous code of conduct they only ever have to look inward to find; Priests who look inward find a gnawing want, and if they let that drive them, they'll get lost in the very un-Mage-y ambition of wanting statues and the adoration of crowds. They only ever look like Mages if they've written that possibility

away, and they'll look less like one if someone else pulls it off and sparks envy.

Mages may be the face of the "stoic" archetype, but much moreso fitting to the philosophical roots of the title, and not any kind of emotionless. They're disciplined zealots, not bureaucrats - and Priests, for all their Class mimicry and malleability, are really the *only* ones that can be that kind of blank-stare pencil pusher. To be clear, not actually going after anyone who does paperwork, just...some people whose personal myth is believing a personal myth is too much work, y'know? Honestly it's kind of funny that the only human way there is not to ignore those passions but, in a way, manually dismiss them. There is no absence of a Classpect - just a supremely finicky one.

For as much of a blip as it was, there's an oddly visceral example of this sub-type of Priest from the Big Lebowski: the bowling scene, where Smokey is accused of stepping over the line. It's a good example of how that blank look can be so goddamn *stubborn* on the weirdest things, especially how it goes toe-to-toe with Walter, written as an apt Derse Lord. Again, Priests and Lords are tied Rivals of Tier 4 Actives, and there's something damn near fascinating in that contest of wills; like watching a single stone endure a hurricane, and make you wonder if both count as "forces of nature". Certainly, I've had arguments like that with Priests in reality, and it is *draining*.

Less emotionally and more coherently, I should mention the antagonist of Persona 4, who explains his worldview in great detail as he walks from Faux-Mage bureaucrat line of thinking, to supervillainy, and quite a few inbetween. As for anything else...just, take my word that my father is a piece of work.

Priests can *talk* like Seers, but they don't really *listen* like one. If they're just casually chatting, then acting Seer-ish is more an idle fascination, which can be disregarded or discarded as needs be. If they're taking Active pride in being a wellspring of information however, there's more than a few tells. One is gravitose, where Priests default to sweeping statements and playing to the big picture; it may not literally be "the fate of mankind", but it's usually pretty close. No matter how certain Seers are that they're right, it's just about *being* right: evidence, efficiency, and basic decorum are how they determine what's a good or bad idea. Another point is just how talkative they are in conversations, as while they might pick up a Seer-like *affect*, Priests are prone to rant a room into submission, like Lords. Seers might be verbose, but they have more innate appreciation for fair debate (and snappy comebacks). Another feature is what was mentioned earlier: a cynicism that all mankind is poisoned, and the Priest is either keen to such things, or has some "miraculous revolution" that would change this. Alongside sentiments of "All pleasures are either too temporary or meaningless to matter" or "Complicated debates the whole world argues on have one obvious objective solution I will share with you", it shouldn't be too hard to spot Priests and their projections. Seer cynicism is localized to the matter at hand, and their optimism is more of a "Surviving and doing good will take boring work, but you just gotta' do it" bent. Finally, if Priests are withering, isolating, or legitimately suicidal (please contact your local hotline), it tends to take on a martyrdom angle rather than Seer dismissive rationalizations. Even if the world has no place for them, they will fixate on how they do not belong to it more than anything else.

Alot of Priests like being "teachers" - one I know has it as a literal job, sure, but I've seen plenty latch onto the concept implicitly or otherwise. It can look Seer-ish, but as I must again reiterate, it's employing a Muse's worldview, while far easier to come across as patronizing -

and, as mentioned above, frequently not to its benefit. Even if you tune out the wilder potential arguments of how everyone is FOOLISH and POISONOUS and MISGUIDED for not surrendering to the Priest's single sole authority of fact and truth...you're still left with people who will calmly and verbosely explain why, for example, "Ferris Bueller's Day Off" is a bad movie because it's not a western. The notion that maybe this is exclusively a problem to them alone, because *they* really like westerns, is either an alien concept they genuinely didn't consider, or incredibly annoying to someone who would prefer you play along to them rewriting the world around their own tastes exclusively.

Not to say Seers don't have their hidden agendas and manipulations, but the thing to look for is leaving autonomy to the people they lecture; maybe they'll insist they know better and you're making a mistake, but hey, it's your finger on the button, and they'll just run away if you're going to fuck everything up. They'll be back tomorrow to see if you've wised up or maybe there's something else to talk about - and if not, what's another burnt bridge? Priests either want control, or drift around aimlessly being controlled by those around them: Tier 4, everything or nothing.

Like I said at the start of this, Seers have a funny habit of looking like a fictional side character designed to spew exposition. With Priests, it's more resembling narrators. Make whatever conclusions you want about the Stanley Parable.

MAGICIANS: A Priest playing Witch is honestly a very safe and stable position for them, but it doesn't mean they actually are the genuine article. Their levity is even more situational, and the dry apathy underpinning it is *much* more demanding - even Prospit Witches consciously recognize what they're stuffing down, and it was never "be the most important person on Earth". They're on the same branch, but it's the Tier 4 intensity of malleability that can trick itself into thinking it's at Tier 1 - temporarily, conditionally, nominally. This document has encouraged Priests to be less autocratic and a touch more whimsical, but the sum of that is still preening and smarmy confidence, irreconcilable with Witchy modest fatalism. Muse instincts can get closer, with all the pedestals, spotlights, and so much "You'll protect me, right?"...but these are surface level. If Witches are penitent to manipulation, it's 3 Tiers short of "I can make anyone do anything"; if Priests are codependent, it's 3 Tiers over "Just do what comes naturally, and I'll be proud of you". Fundamentally, the Witchiest Priests aren't even trying to be Class #3 - they're trying to be saucy brats. And like. Okay. Do that, if you want. More power to you. But not only is that not a Class itself, it's only *one* mask of the Lonely Magician, worn for entirely different motivations, not all the time, not exclusively, by someone who isn't even trying to hide their entire face; someone who isn't scared to admit it's not their entire personality. Surely, at least, overthinking what the Witch title says about you, entitles you to, and demanding the entire world agrees with it...is the least Witchy thing you can do.

I think, until the day I die, transfems will be cursing my name over this. Not like I've been very elegant about the matter in the past...or, even now, maybe. At a certain point, I've just got no other choice besides coming to terms with it. Nobody reads the damn doc; they read between the lines to things that weren't just unintended, but outright decried and deconfirmed elsewhere, and then THAT gets passed along in a game of telephone to people who never even heard of me before. I mean, if they're going to keep attacking a strawman, why should I feel hurt?

Yeah, yeah, I still haven't met an AMAB Witch, or an AFAB Priest. Maybe I missed one - no, I'm serious, maybe I did! I still think it's fucking dumb to gender classes whenever it's personally convenient. I suppose I have still been pretty soft on Witches but...fuck, man, I don't know, I just ain't got that much scathing to say. The worst ones I refuse to associate with don't spend

years trying to fuck with me in revenge plots - and if one did, that wouldn't *automatically* make them a Priestess. Hell, you know how many conservative Witches I've met?...

Look, you want to be a Wiccan? Go ahead, not my jurisdiction. You want to be a Witch Class? What is that to you? What was it yesterday, and what will it be tomorrow? Does it feel like the title might slip away if you don't hold on tight, and make you an empty vacuum? Does your notion of being a Witch include drinking from the skulls of your enemies, or making jokes like "Man, I wish everyone I don't like would kill themselves, cause I'm too lazy to get up"? I'm not here to measure how *much* of a joke that is - just saying I certainly ain't met a Witch who *makes* those kinds of jokes. If you still got an argument, I'm pretty sure it's because none of these words mean to you what they mean to me. Trans rights are human rights, last I'll say of it.

Comparisons to Heirs can go a few ways, and with surprising deftness; in being more autonomous Muses, they can exert the same will in the name of others, mimicking the subtle **change** of Heirs. However, trying to be the problem-solver and diplomat is rather hollow without a Mage's center, highlighting their dispassion and drifting interests. If they're not going full on Muse worship, then people's problems feel too much like irrational distractions - and that is a very stark contrast that can change on a dime. Heirs are ultimately unique in their drive to get right into the thick of issues and work them out from all angles, where method is the merit and not the other way around. Yes, there's a certain symmetry with the worst Heir traits in becoming someone's first (and only) approver of information, but this trained helplessness from a real Heir is just so they can help eternally - Priests don't want to hear complaining, which makes a routine of *crisis* undesirable. They can go tit-for-tat in regards to an Heir's potential for authority - from aimless spitballing to autocratic totality - but everything else won't match. Disinterest and vaugery can make it difficult to know what the next step in the plan is, while fleeting fascinations take priority as "the thing everyone has to do right now", running akin to Breath or Void tactics without ever *really* integrating more wills. It's tempting to consider oneself a self-sufficient good-samaritan, selflessly helping those around you, but the catch with Priests is that they're not very self-sufficient, and not great at knowing what selflessness looks like outside their own definition of it. The catch with Heirs is that they're addicts, and that's its own issue.

I'm going somewhere with this.

Also, based on the amount of queer people who end up Priests (not all of them, and not all Priests, but alot), this might explain why some of them latched on the June headcanon. Not saying there aren't trans Heirs, but the consensus sticks out.

SERVANTS: Living in the shadow of your own impossible dreams is, if nothing else, kind of a bummer. Priests have many avenues to tackle their desires, but there is always the Page method of wistful imploring, with an awkward exterior to laugh off the insanity of what you actually *want*. Priests playing the Page route can weaponize their self-pity, manipulate their friends into favours (god forbid romance), cry until they're carried to the finish line, obscure their transgressions by focusing on their shortcomings...and, unfortunately, none of this is actually *beyond* true Pages. ~~We~~ They can be very treacherous individuals, so we cannot distinguish the two by sin alone - but we *can* tell the difference from

language. A Priest's default view on their Aspect is either a twisted selfishness, a weakness they feel icky associating with, or profusely denying that even a drop exists within their minds. Sure, they'll flaunt their opposed Aspect, but styling that as Pagey ambitions doesn't quite land. Remember that while Pages want to help, they - like Mages - prioritize first how their skills will help *themselves*, where assistance is usually just passing on their self-sufficiency. Just the same, no matter how uncomfortable a Page's inverted compromises may be, it still makes for a much more balanced back and forth between two palettes. Priests want it all one way, and never want to even *look* in the direction of one particular Aspect - and with it, their immutable self. Pseudo-Page rants cannot articulate a firm idea of who they are and how that would make them happy, only hoping that selfless-sacrifice and grand "bringing people together" ambitions would validate them...and if you don't discern Muse-isms in the specifics of those speeches, you sure will when they start crying. Pages might mope at not being able to build citadels, but they find their fun with sandcastles in the meantime. They always know *exactly* who they want to be.

This above statement will, hopefully, reach Pages. It will hopefully reach friends of Pages and Priests, who may find words to their arguments. But to Priests intent on calling themselves Pages...I have met too many who keep chasing the title. Who fear everything Priest might imply about themselves, and fear more that people will see them that way. I will say again that Priests have their own heroic potentials, but I still won't lie and say they aren't the same Class as all the horror stories listed - that, if they chose to, if they rationalized it, they could become those things.

I sympathize with their fears, but I'm quite certain it's only so scary to them because they know it's right. Because they know that angry emptiness is inside them, and they just want to hear that they're more than that - not, instead, that the emptiness *itself* is more than it appears. That it *is* and *always was* the solid fundamental personality they keep looking for. They want to eclipse it, but Classpects aren't bestowed, not something you can simply coat *over* what haunts us: they are what haunts us.

That the line between Huey and Hal from Metal Gear is not glamorous is not my doing. That Walter White wasn't a Page to start with in his journey to infamy, also wasn't my doing. That I am *starved* for any good depictions of Priests of fiction, let alone those who wear a Pagey face, is not how I wanted things to go. I will mention who I've met, what I've observed, and what things are possible, but even then, no Priest I consider "good" wore a Page face. None of the ones I call friend will just cry and scramble for justifications when you confront them on their actions. At least the Pages who didn't grow out of it hesitate more.

Knighthood, then? Devout to others, self-sacrificing, put others on a pedestal, intentionally annoying? It's not hard to see elements of this with any Priest, but it doesn't really click no matter what looks right in the moment. As casual friends, Priests aren't really huge on being bossed around (real or imagined) - they'll tag along to outings if they have nothing else planned, maybe even get excited and really into it, but usually ditch it as quickly as they took to it. While there might be some comradery in the cracks, a Priest who seems kinda annoyed and like they've got better things to do isn't bluffing, and might even forget you exist in 2 weeks. Knights push people away at the best of times while sticking through the worst, holding strict to a very consistent playbook on how to help people while Thieftastic escape plans bubble under the surface. Left to their own devices, Derse Priests come closest in the "class clown" irony fest...but without the

more coherent dynamic and substance, often only have more layers of irony under the irony, which tends to become existentially terrifying.

Hussie always did say Dave was the easiest to write. That stuck with me.

OUTLAWS: A Priest's self-interest is usually buried, but Muse mannerisms can be suppressed enough that it becomes transparent (mostly for Dersites). However, this is still a mask, and will either focus on one of two Thieftish traits: charismatic cruelty, or victimhood. It's important to remember that Thieves are not truly uninhibited, anchored by bluster that prefers flat answers of self-interest or principle, rather than the uncertain ambiguity at the truth of it. The Knight interplay does create a self-sabotaging tsundere, but it is the *contradiction* that allows the rebel to not rebel against friends. Thieves are suckers for praise, but they're hesitant about power; they'll reject totality not because it's "too much work", but because it just won't feel right, and they already know their place in the world next to the friends they'll fight for. Priests can act Thieftish contextually or Knightish contextually, but they omit the dichotomy and details; Thieves only **steal** from an Aspect within reason, not **conquer** the whole damn thing in totality. It is the "rebel/sidekick" axis that looks for "blood brothers to stick it to the man" - and it is "everything or nothing" totality that encourages "divine soulmates while the whole world can and should go to hell". The first Faux-Thief Priest mirrors that scrappy punk spirit, where whim is theatrically hyperbolized into a near sociopathic disregard for everything else. While this narcissism can go on for awhile, it might evolve into "I'm only making excuses for my self interest", but it's never *really* self-awareness if followed by "What do you mean you aren't?". Fact is, Thieves have more driving them than cheap thrills, and blend that substance with the Knight impulse far easier; for Priests, any "center of my world" worship is prone to derail Faux-Thief plans and personas, all while those idols may feel rightfully overwhelmed by the pedestal.

Even outside of Vriscourse, Priests can blur the idea of what Thieves are and/or want. Here's a line to draw: Pagan Min of "Far Cry 4" is a Priest, and Kale of "Hi-Fi Rush" is a Thief. Despite the tech-CEO status and a few lines on "freeing people from themselves", Kale's affect and attitude still land squarely on a Thief-y mindset - certainly reminiscent of the ones I know. Pagan is however, beyond a more unique charisma, textbook Priest.

The second iteration of Faux-Thieves is really just a dry version of Muse seclusion, where gestures in the direction of "cool, unimpressed loner" lack the essential vigor: reclusive, bitter, vapid, languishing, unapproachable, suspicious, and all around venomous. They'll have only a few friends, harder walls, and a blank (if not bored) look on their face when a call for action presents itself. They are enjoying the quiet joys of an Aspect withheld for too long, and will sneer and seclude until no one is around to take it from them. This is a mask more often worn by Derse Priests, and it is interesting how much Derse Muses also mimic these behaviors - never enough to warrant a full "**Muses and Thieves**" discrepancy section, no, but the

caustic behavior here is 1-1 on either side of the Inversion in this instance. Fittingly, Muse-isms come quite easily to this iteration of Priest, but struggle to unify with the more pressing concern of protecting their vulnerable self; the plausibly-deniable absolutes of “what your actions imply” and “what’s best for you”, hamstrung in their ability to inspire next to such prevalent and undisguised apathy. Victimhood and guilt-tripping comes naturally as a weapon to “strike back” at an unjust world (which was already a Muse problem), tainting the ability to justify what trauma resides at the root. There’s a case to be made that all of this is the Priest impulse most honest; how little flame there is to reach all those ambitions, when they’d rather be spoonfed the spoils by others. In this malaise, there are so fewer faces they can endear and enrapture...and yet, far closer purity to who they are without that voice. Bitter, sure - but if they could control that envious sense of competition for a moment, maybe this is “enough”.

I’ve seen plenty around, and know some in passing, but I haven’t been up close to this kind of Priest outside of that one who lived with me - which, I imagine, is part of why. She played many faces over the time I knew her, but that emotional nadir immune to every attempt I made to lift her spirits...it’s left me with a wariness of going too far for anyone. Yet, I have enough lingering respect for her to still feel bad about invoking any association to the protagonist of Andrew Hussie’s other work, “Psycholonials”.

I already had versions of this document floating around with the Priest claim before someone reached out to inform me that Hussie’s other work seemed to imply a certain commentary on their Class: “Waste” was being treated less as a joke, and with the soundtrack including titles like “Ephemeral Muse” and “Means of Conquest”, I felt it an obligation to check it out. Without dwelling on the whole plot, Z is a comical extreme of everything I had already written above: an utterly rancid creature of unrepentantly caustic opportunism, wrapped in a rotting bed of languishing self pity and a stillborn god-complex. Certainly stuck me as familiar to a few people, but that there are still those online who openly empathize, imagining she’s a fellow transgirl...jeez. You said it, not me. She’s a good example of how Priests/Priestesses can manifest, but boy do I hope they pick any other way.

Still, if you play that same reclusiveness with some softer edges, there’s another angle to take - Faux-Rogue Priests are, if nothing else, inoffensive. Rather than withdraw from the world (exclusively) from resignation, these Priests may believe the world is simply better off without them; to provide sympathy to those they feel are more deserving, all with an undisguised vulnerability. Now while a Priest can *sell* this more like a Rogue, these central justifications are simply the result of Priests re-inventing the Muse default, making themselves into a wallflower-martyr - “I’ll only drag you down, you’re wasting your time”. That Priests have more natural skepticism, self-preservation, and malleability is what can tangle up the tells...but, it’s important to remember that this compassion (or at least capacity for it) is genuine. Trying to discern Priests from Rogues is difficult if you’re trying to differentiate types of devotion, but it flatly isn’t going to work if you’re looking for malice; Rogues can do more damage than simple insincerity (not often, but not never), and a Priest may very well be acting entirely selfless. If you *really* want a tell, then you’ve got to pay attention to what they’re holding back: Rogues may feel rotten on the inside, remembering those they’ve let down, but those are scars that they can force past with a smile. There isn’t a whole lot of trauma you can do to a Rogue

where they won't still veer into acting like...you know...Rogues. For these Priests, they truly do believe they are a *heinous* wretch of human life, and this isolation and self-loathing is either deserved, or necessary to keep them in check. To stop the pendulum from swinging the other way, they have to bind it with heavy chains, all of which is a clear tell for the Priest/Muse axis...and, ultimately, still not a healthy resolution to it.

You get alot more blank looks from Priests: even if they're not mocking, even if they're not hurtful, it's just so hard to motivate them. Rogues don't just participate, they try to put their heart into it, which can make losses hit harder than the woobie who gave up on happiness years ago.

...I screwed up someone's Class for 2 years...

FAE: As much as Priests have too many ideas that never get off the ground, that doesn't mean *they* won't get off the ground. Acting Maid-ish keeps Priests moving, and is a healthy state for them (so long as they don't tip over into Lord). Of course, the "living embodiment of their Aspect, held together by beliefs so strong and saturated they seem alien"...well, Maids are pretty specific. They **create** more of their Aspect because they refuse to live life outside its terms, and often become busy workers in a career that suits their shtick. For a Priest, either capitalist domination becomes their shtick (expect lots of quotes from ancient warlords and emperors), or they try to go wild on *art*. Said art will be a lurid hodge-podge of personal childhood nostalgias, contrasting extremes of philosophy, unrelated media references, outright plagiarism, their own personal existential ennui, some kind of commentary (or integration) of whoever the audience is, and the author themselves. It's everything at once, which ironically makes it easier to specify than any of the 12 Aspects on their own. Yeah, Priests do have one in there, but whatever "aura" they give off through their work is always the Muse at play, and even that won't be completely obvious in their work.

I always told her to write short stories. It bothered her she never finished anything, that was obvious. She tried measuring success in word count, and she was venomous if I was anything less than impressed with her about it. I did genuinely love her writing and whatever she shared, but that obsession with making a magnum opus...well, it's at least a given with most Priests. Even to those plucky few, it's still never good enough.

Sylphs are a stranger pick. Priests might lend a hand, or become overly-involved in certain contexts, but it's held back by all their other fun personality quirks we've gone over. The simultaneously stable-and-unstable high energy of Sylphs is a peculiar thing, and even Princes flirting with Inversion can't (or, more realistically, "won't") imitate their personality traits wholesale. On the rare occasions Priests do, this actually isn't that bad for them - I mean, it's obviously the Muse side more at play, but to resemble a Sylph is to be expressing enough of your vulnerable inside to be transparent alongside the help, while the debt to others is "shaky" enough to be open for negotiation instead of overwriting everything with Muse certainty. Sylphs have their own issues, true, but they're often doing better for themselves compared to Princes, all while being much easier to address

and embrace that Prince side from personal growth. If a Priest really does look like a Sylph, it's probably best to give them a pat on the back and continue encouraging that behavior. No matter how the Priest and Muse impulses might become tangled, there's altruistic potentials in either of them, and better when they're not cancelling each other out.

Sylphiness is just coded too feminine for people. Course, there are still trans-Priests out there...they tend to worry less about that, and more about everything else in the world. You see it more then, even if it's a cross stitch of Pagey/Musey features. Priests really are at their best when they're disconnected from an obligation to male-coded behavior, and I won't pretend I don't think there's a lesson in that.

Still...it kind of, "unlocks" something in them, you know? Priests have this peculiar axis where, as much as I've gone over how manipulative it is when they're just *pretending* to be helpful and deferential while trying to control you...some of them, just, genuinely look up to you, and will even ask *you* for direction, which is one of the reasons why I named them as such. They're really not all bad - just, too eager to convince themselves they are, whether out of self-aggrandizing or self-loathing.

ROYALS: In a certain regard, Priests reflect the most misguided ideals of a Prince in full form. Prospit Priests carry alot of "jollyness" that Prospit Princes would envy, and the need to prove that to everyone is either very elegant or almost forgotten; Derse Priests can embrace such a wider net of masks that their "reinventions" feel much more potent, when the signature Aspect/self-identity is easier to suppress. To resemble Princes *directly* however, we're talking about two different masks, much like with Thieves. The first is a methodical smartypants free of the constrictions of ideological delusions and distractions, here to instruct you on living an "objectively correct" existence, warning you of a "seductive evil thinking" boogeyman. This persona of efficient instructor can be invoked situationally, always accompanied by the inverted Aspect flavouring whatever singular path the Priest has made for you - because this is a flat Muse just the same as Princes misfire their Sylph side. This will be invoked situationally regardless of how bold or skittish the current mask is, as it's as essential to them as a Prince's conniptions. Yet, it is in resolving the argument inside that they try ("try") to skip the argument with others - Princes are obstinate and grumpy, Priests are suggestive and plastic. While this changes "tortured genius" into "bored genius", it's just a *numbed* discontent, and Priests are still prone to concoct insane leaps of logic and lying if they think they're losing you. The reason they're better at it is that they're less bound to something bigger, less aware of their accountability, more hypocritical in what's driving them...well, you get the picture. The average of Princes is not a pretty picture, and Priests playing into it run into the same problems. It doesn't do much good, and being an uppity prick isn't *that* fulfilling.

It's like a Prince of Heart, except more robotic and calculated. You know. In this fun hypothetical we're doing.

Still, Princes have methods of circling their maligned Aspect beyond formal lectures. While the worldview remains that the speaker *alone* is aware of the pitfalls and folly around all mankind, this can be marketed as less

“educated elegance” and instead a series of forbidden, bitter truths to upset the complacent. For both Princes and Priests, this approach is ~~edgy teenage supervillainy~~ crass and impulsive - yet, it is closer to the heart of their conniptions, if a far more difficult sell to those around them. Because of this, both Classes aren’t likely to *stick* to this approach, but Princes will fall back on it easier. For them, it is a series of ornery insults and write-offs...but for Priests, it is a megalomaniacal decree that mankind is *nothing* but lost sheep. Still, as with Prince hypocrisy, this is *not* species-wide - it’s the person in front of you, and if Priests are getting *this* direct, then they’re probably not having a nice day, or week, or life. That this is less “overall dismissal” and more “decrying all but one single perfect expression of the Aspect” may actually be more obvious than with Princes; Priests tend to arrive at conclusions faster, rather than churning ideas so long that languishing itself becomes sport. Derse Priests often present this behavior as a sort of in-on-the-joke villanous performance art, while Prospits drift into moments of a casual unnerving sadism, but both will show how serious it is when something serious is on the line. This is the most violent and undisguised translation of **conquering** their Aspect...but it still reflects an individual who feels **conquered**. All this sheparding comes from a nut who so easily sees themselves as a sheep - small, insignificant, invalidated, and unheard. It is tempting to call this the truest face of a Priest, but it may be more fair to say it is the result of trusting the Priest impulse alone...and there is nothing lonelier than the human brain can kick up.

Look, I’m aware I’ve had some choice words here. If I’ve got something to say, and it makes the point I’m aiming for, and that no insult goes *too* far relative to the (potential) transgression, I put it down. Just please don’t misread this as a blind hatred to all Priests; truthfully, I feel sorry for them. I know lots of people say that as some kind of faux-forgiveness that swings back to “Oh, this is how you ACTUALLY hurt someone”, but it’s not an insult. Nobody asks for their Classpect. I want to help.

...oh put your hand down, *yes*, alot of prominent interpretations of the Joker count as a Priest of Rage, are you happy? There’s too much extreme mythmaking around that though. Dutch of Red Dead provides a well rounded Prospit example (mostly during the third act, when everything starts vividly falling apart), and I’d personally bet on Priest of Blood/Muse of Breath.

Less introspective than all of this is Bards, since that’s less “adjacent to all the personal demons present in all walks of life” and more “pissing people off is funny”. Priests who value stability may resemble a similar lackadasical attitude, but stray on direction. Bards are *very* talkative, especially when they shouldn’t be; Priests attend their motives more directly, where rambling tangents is a distraction, not the process. Prospits might both have some casual complaining, but the Priests are trying to iron out legitimate irks and irritations, where Bards tend to talk for the sport of it. Dersites can both push jokes too far and veer into insensitive topics, but Derse Bards just sort of “even out” given enough time. Derse Priests converge towards an epiphany of realizing they’re very empty inside, and being ironic and funny makes things more difficult to resolve. It’s only a Maid’s center that keeps Bards so self-assured, and Priests *are* their own center.

Malicious Priests are still prone to employ Bard-like traits in order to downplay consequences of their actions, or to cast doubt on competing sources of truth. Course, a real Bard of Rage argues for the sake of itself, and with a Maid of Hope's guidance; it's different if you're shutting out every truth but yourself for the sake of consolidating power. "Don't listen to the experts, only I know how the real world works".

The first time I posted this brochure to Reddit, someone said they identified with Bard beforehand, but my stuff on Priests really shook them. I prodded them about it, but they ended with "Yeah probably Bard, nevermind." I wasn't convinced, but some time later, we ran into each other again on a fluke. After a few days of talking it out, it came down to Priest of Heart, and he's been in my circle since. He helped me with much of what's here, and even recommended "Heralds" as the group name rather than "Authors", which I think works great.

MASTERS: The Tier 4 Active Rivals are mirrors at their peaks, but just as much in their mundanity. Whether towering aspirations are too far away to matter, or even recognized plainly by the dreamer as *probably a bad idea*, both classes have plenty to distinguish themselves away from these concerns. Talkative, quick to jump to conclusions, talkative, sporadic temper they remind themselves is irrational, and talkative, there is room to confuse the two. Now, importantly, this isn't usually the case for Lords when they're younger; 9 times out of ten, world domination is on their mind before they're out of primary school. Priests, meanwhile, are a total crapshoot, where any supervillain potentials can collect dust for *decades*. Still the real smoking gun to distinguish them is, one can articulate an aspect - and with it, what they're all about. Even in the vaguest potentials (Breath and Void), still an uncomplicated celebration of value to What They're All About, while the inverted passive aspect seems distractingly absent from their speeches. Grandiose Priests will deny their aspect from creation itself, and middling Priests will blank and change their mind on what their aspect might be 20 times in one week. Even if a Lord recognizes the problems with their ego-fuel, they aren't in short supply.

The fictions with Lords and Priests just "vibing" are sparse, and I can't even think of one good case where they were confused for each other. Still, sure as hell *met* one. In my defense, if someone catches up with me and *introduces themselves as a Priest*, it's hard to imagine how they could do so accidentally.

Lords will agree with things they don't understand, trying to finish your sentences for you - but they generally do so with a stronger center of who THEY are. I took that for granted, towards someone a little too fascinated with petty titles. That, and, some other things I overlooked. Anyways, it's in the past now.

Sure, you can boil alot of this discrepancy down to "Shang Tsung and Shao Khan", but things like that are never *rules*. People are only predictable if you have no stake in insisting they are.

But what, then, about the crazy ones? The would-be ubermenches? The world is in no shortage of Lords determined to write their signature on every atom of creation; even those who mature and break loose from this haze of douchebaggery will live their whole lives adjacent to its influence, in all the wistful fantasies that are never *entirely* jokes. This is to say that Lords are consistent - more than any other Class -, displaying all these cliches from their teenage years to the nursing home. Priests are *not* consistent, and achieving their goals and self-actualization can take many different masks and approaches, as we've discussed; a Lord-ish persona

often manifests *after* success, or simply situationally on the road there. Regardless, this remains the loudest, most dangerous, and most delusional Priest possible - a **visionary** autocrat, total and absolute, trying to achieve some "magnum opus" while stamping out even the tiniest competing voice. Mind you, this has all the same problems as regular Lords: being "certain" about things they know nothing about, trying to overpower logic and competing voices with insults, obfuscating embarrassing facts, "knowing what's best for you" by insisting upon a fantasy version of you they have in their heads, all while their success is generally built more on inheritance or raw luck rather than the "talent" they advertise. Beyond the fallacies of loudmouthed shithheads, *distinguishing* the two relies heavily on realizing that Faux-Lord Priests are over-saturated inverted Muses; the vibe they give off, the justifications, if they make it sound like it benefits you, it's still not what's driving them. What they fear, whatever they want *you* to fear, whatever is the opposite end of the axis to the Aspectbound stereotypes they're displaying, *that* is the true driving force - it's just painted the wrong colour.

Look, seriously, if you're a Priest (or Lord?) who made it this far, thank you, but I need you to emotionally detach here. We're talking some SERIOUS live wires here. If it seems a far cry from yourself, *good*. Just don't get complacent...or, stay complacent, I guess?

As previously stated, Lords are consistent: if their self-aggrandizing gets out of hand, everything else follows in equal measure. Rage, heartbreak, joy, irritation, sympathy, bigotry, poetry or bile - all genuine, all uncensored, all a part of their cohesive(?) worldview. Contrasting that, faux-Lord Priests are dependent on their audience, and their most genuine moments are often alarmingly materialistic or cold; they're prone to confess something egregious, then surgically double-back to try and smooth it out. Yes, Lords have their own double-think, making either Class excellent con-artists, but one specializes in confidence and the other in artistry. Lords are often an unfiltered stream of consciousness, and even a defter hand still draws from their gut instincts as a primary source of "intuition" and "experience". Contrasting that, faux-Lord Priests veer in the other direction, gesturing outwards at famous figures or some dictionary definition of "happiness" and "success". Both have ulterior motives, but one overflows with ideas where the other is a vacuum - Lords overpower and double down, but Priests pivot, enrapture, sweet talk. Sure, they always contradict themselves eventually, lie about something too obvious or forget a previous lie...but the longer they talk, the more they get their hooks in. To say nothing of value, but everything you want to hear.

They are not good leaders, but they are still often leaders - just because they can't stand the thought of being anything else. The CEOs, the elected officials, the outright despots, trying to pretend their errant whims can amount to divine intuition fit to shape the earth. When it comes to the tyrants and oligarchs, be it on TV or the history books, it's usually a coinflip if they're a Lord or Priest; if it lands on its side, it's a particularly desperate Prince trying to close the gap. There are few exceptions when these are the ones most keen to grab power first, and kick the nearest guy out of reach of it. Good people share power, or give it up outright, and I'm not saying they shouldn't...but it leaves too much open to opportunism. Maybe I'm too

cynical, or inherited too much from my Priest father, but you look outside and tell me the world isn't controlled by people who can't control themselves: "powerful men", as defined by children who never grew up.

Both will screw you over, but a Lord's betrayals are brief excursions from their personal story; a Priest may firmly think it really *isn't* about them, but at this level the doublethink ensures it always will be. They're even worse than Lords at admitting fault; they can't defer to experts, can't admit they don't know something, can't let a competitor (or collaborator) outshine them, and they can't admit even the *tiniest* mistake. It's always someone else's fault, or "didn't happen", or "more complicated than that" (it's not), and any recording will prove them a liar. Sure, their lies are better than "NO I DIDN'T", but a Lord's impulsive lies and denials are because they only need to convince themselves; intricacy is a Priests downfall, as there are limits to building multiple houses of cards with every new person you meet. Every misstep or accusation requires more excuses for anyone still listening, bloating into an increasingly isolated delusion: the **only** voice of reason, the **only** one who gets it, telling you not to trust anyone or anything outside their bubble, lest you be "manipulated" and led astray. If you're that removed from reality, you can't correctly interact with it, resulting in failure which only begets more delusion and more failure. If anyone disentangles from their orbit, Priests only put more pressure on whoever's left, desperate to not lose their remaining sources of validation. **Ultimately, Priests have a dependency to others for feeling "normal" no matter what their state of egomania. Lords lack the tools or self-awareness to stop people leaving, and won't miss a beat until literally everyone is gone**. It's a doomed effort for Priests to try and sustain this kind of audience, but enough capital or die-hard supporters will let them lash out for a lifetime, rather than cut their losses and be *happy*.

Ego from Guardians of the Galaxy 2 was always...uncomfortably familiar. We see how readily he rewrites his world from the slightest inconvenience, and how full of himself he is. He is desperate to not be alone - but the legitimate connection, the **dependency** he was growing towards Quill's mom scared him so much he burned it out, lest it threaten his worldview (Mind? Maybe). He'll be, do, and say anything to keep your attention (besides apologize), and write his world any way he wants to draw you in and make you submit to his dogma. A more human example would be Jonas Venture (Rage), with both shining as awful fathers. Still, both look like Prospit variants. You want a Derse one?

Doc Scratch.

English might've been made of the same components, and shown the intent, but Scratch is all the personality and justifications - all the undermining, all the disarming, all the absolutes. It's...well, familiar. To me, sure. Maybe you know someone personally, or are a Derse Priest and have been that cruel before (if so, thanks for sticking with this despite the clear lack of flattery). But you catch Hussie's public statements and the workplace confessions that get out...hell. "Symphony of Desolation". It all lines up too well.

...and we've finally come full circle: what actually makes Priests appear as Muses? Their second half? Of course we've established that, we knew that, but its Priests themselves who so frequently don't. Often the closest they come is in resembling Rogues, Seers, or Sylphs, but none of that was ever true - just tricks of the light, just moments of fluctuation. To be anything

we've listed is, so often, only one more uneven incongruity to accept the outside world and their place in it. Just the wide swath of decisions a Priest can take to do something *besides* playing an honest part-time Muse...but, what if they do? How does one tell them apart? Of course, there are the blemishes; the sudden out-of-nowhere blowups of screaming anger, leaving even long-time pals baffled their friend was even capable of that. But under the unlikely situation that hasn't happened (or the disappointingly more likely situation that the Priest gaslit themselves into forgetting it happened), then there are still differing priorities. First is that Priests are, however gentle in *affect*, still more practical; more invested in research, rules, and science. Muses, by contrast, express their Aspect as more of a nakedly artistic "vibe", with moral matters argued on the morals first before anything material; ironically, this makes them more likely to be the religious one. Another thing is that endless quest for identity, as Muses tend to be pretty resolved. Are they empty inside? Too often - but they don't have that same pull to fill it with a mask, compared to friendship, religion, or just flatly saying "Yep, I am garbage, end of story". Priests need an answer - Priests need to *know* who they are, and find something that doesn't slip away through their fingers. Muse deeds can do a lot to heal them, but the Muse *title* is only theirs with several important, Inversion-shaped asterisks...which is a shame, given how much they want *anything* to stick.

Transwomen who are Priests (again, a lot, not all, don't @ me) can adopt Muse mannerisms near flawlessly, only being more fidgety and mumbly. They generally don't before transitioning, but they can nail the nuances even before they get hormones. I mean everyone's got an Inversion, and while Classes are all kind of "masks", there's still truth to them, in a sense. Again, fidgety, but that anxiety doesn't mean it's fake. They seem happier. Feels like the biggest problem is Lords and Faux-Lords are both coded pretty masculine in the collective consciousness, and not enough masculine-identifying Muses to shake things up from the other side.

Ugh. People make too big a deal over gender, I swear to god, just move the fuck on.

Half Muse, Part-Time Muse, Inverted Muse - none of these are intended as insults, and I implore any reading not to take them that way. It is too easy to read a narrative of Priests only as a foul corruptor, and Muses as all so much more uncomplicated. Even in acknowledging Inversion, it can be better to one's faith in themselves (and their reputation) to call oneself a Muse first. It's not like it's even that inaccurate; it's folly to imply they don't have a genuine ability to reflect, to champion, to cherish, to deify, and love others devoutly. A Prosperit Priest's tranquil calm isn't all some treacherous facade to lull you into a false sense of security, and a Derse Priest's self-critical anxieties aren't all hesitation to inevitable and evil predation. They both *can* be, but even then, just the same to True Muses. The Active ego remains fragmented on either end, and ignoring the signs just to speedrun to the more "legitimate" Class does inarguable damage. So often, this only reflects the most Priestly problem possible: trying to bury all their personal problems, and *only* be what other people will accept. True Muses can hold that house of cards a little longer...but no matter how long it holds, no matter what doublethink still leaks through, it would be such a **waste** of an

entire half of the psyche, and all the potential in it. There is beauty in the Priest Class; there is imagination, wit, ingenuity, and goodness. There always was. The human brain doesn't *do* evil; it just occasionally produces someone with the hardest time recognizing virtue - *trusting* it -, and the most fear that someone will take it away from them. This document will not condone such a violence just because it's now self-inflicted.

Assuming I'm right on "Waste" being a self-deprecating front while "King" was the real one, I have a host of criticisms to make at Andrew - and if I'm wrong, there's still plenty of other things one could complain about. But presuming so, in mad conspiracy, it would be awful coy; playing with their cards face down, and smiling smug at winning an argument they cheated anyone from even knowing existed. "King" is a label that fulfills the Class's darkest (**AND OPTIONAL**) obsession: to be the defacto, absolute, unquestionable leader, where any other substitution falters compared to their rule. No matter how cruel, no matter how selfish, no matter how pathetic or childish...they're the "King". Everyone else exists to serve them, and any beauty in the alternative does not change that fact - but it's not a fact. They're not medieval Kings. They just want to be treated like ones. A King, a Teacher, a Father (or whichever), a Superior, with the Rightest Most Correct opinions that reflect and guide and define all others. It's kinda stupid when you lay it out like that, ain't it?

I may not know exactly what goes through Hussie's head, but I've met enough Priests of this mindset that it's worth tackling regardless. The facts of the Class exist separate to the opinion, despite the deft ability of humans to conflate symbology with material; to even *imply* they should be called King is unjust. The title and its baggage attach to the unbiased fact like a parasite, infecting the actual ability of others to conceptualize and recognize these individuals, propagating their most poisonous megalomania - an expectation of obedience, a pervasive gaslighting doubt in your ability to do so away from them. If "Lord" wasn't grandfathered in, I'd probably have changed that too. I object to all these tyrants, as much as I mean genuine sympathy to those who wouldn't; that there should be middle ground between "King" and "Waste". They need encouragement, but shouldn't see it only as getting to the top of the pile and deciding what's best for everyone. **You're an Active Class - act like it. Stop inventing someone else's opinion and start speaking yours.**

I have opted to name the Class Priest for many reasons (or at least not changed it from the initial spitballing). Not just in rejection of these darker impulses, but to spotlight the mechanism that breeds it. If you don't buy their hype, if you don't treat them like some super important person with the insider knowledge you "need to listen to or you'll be lost"...then they're just hot air. If they weren't, they wouldn't need you. There's better potentials than trying to make people feel like a tiny, insignificant lost soul, or just *being* that in misearable isolation. The Muse impulse helps, in all the love and validation they always wanted to have. Providing it must be pretty nice too - but you're can't lose that thread either. You *have* to find a palatable justification and expression for that Aspect of yours, actually stand on your own two feet as the Active Class you actually are...and maybe that's the only way a Priest can go "god tier".

I'm certainly making an argument for it.

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INVERSION (PAYOFF): It's time for a motherfucking redemption arc.

PRIESTS AND MUSES are not evil people, and never have been. Dangerous, sure. Absolutely. 100%. Perhaps a subjective-evil-under-certain-contexts and you are free to not forgive them. But there is no such thing as inevitable evil, of immutable sin, of this measure of a soul. They are individuals saddled with an arrangement of beliefs that pushes them into titanic absolutes, and gives them the capability to be natural manipulators - even then, this is no irreconcilable anamoly of psyche or power, no less mundane than the people listed thus far, medieval titles and flair

notwithstanding. It is the Muse who gives everything to others, and who excercises the Priest impulse as their single role to play in everyone else's show; it is the Priest who so often fears this pull to others, and excercises their will lash back at a world they *believe* expects everything of them. Look, there's enough Muses of contradicting religious faiths, working within an Aspect framework, that they have to understand no one's actually *forcing* them to do anything. Just as well for Priests, even if they project that pull as something material or universal. Synthesizing these two impulses is not about pushing Priests *entirely* into their Muse side, just as much as it isn't about asking Muses to go full spite all the time - it is, however, about avoiding making other people dependent on your words, spinning them around your orbit. There is a miscommunication at work, it doesn't have to be that way, and I will do my best to help you see that. Ultimately, the choice to take my advice, or anyone else's, is yours. You've always had a choice, and you have my sincere sympathies if it seemed like you didn't. That wasn't your fault - someone probably made you feel like it was -, but taking accountability for the life you have now, and your ability to help people, feels pertinent.

It's frustrating that every Priest has their own rationalization for why they are the way they are. Narcassism, sociopathy, autism, schizotypal, disassociative identity disorder - never enough on their own to explain all their quirks. Classes don't match personality disorders, there's too many cases of mismatches and exceptions...but I also don't know if every single Priest's ennui can be attributed purely to being a Priest. I'm not a psychologist. Not everyone talks enough. It's frustrating. If any of this stuck, please talk to a professional.

One Aspect **conquered**, one **commanded** - so absolute, and so far from control. This is just brain chemistry, just sensation, just assumption. The Muse impulse is not a divine obligation to every soul on earth, not any actual "sixth sense" to the universe's secrets, and not some great superpower to control others wills - it can only *appear* as these things, be *believed* as those things, and either embraced or rejected as both the wielder and receiver choose. Just as well, the Priest impulse does not define the person as some fixed function, or imperator of mankind, or subhuman waste - again, it just tends to feel like that. Take a step back, and this isn't any different from Princes and Sylphs failing to harmonize, weaving the Active Aspect into the Passive without admitting it, poisoning a true capacity to help. Take another step back, and see how Thieves and Knights show how the two impulses allow a comfortable retreat when protest or protection run us ragged. Bring it back all the way, and see how this isn't fundamentally different than a Witch's personal fun and a Seer's big picture - just so much *louder*, so much more *volatile*. An Active impulse is not the individual; it is simply the allotment of Aspect to justify and motivate personal interests and expressions. A Passive impulse, likewise, reflects the rest of that allotment, justifying and motivating our role to others. None of this is about burning, dominating, or uniting the whole world; *nobody* knows the whole world, we barely know our fucking neighbors. These extremes of intensity repeatedly fail to balance themselves out, where so long as either side is rejected, contempt fills the empty space - and for Priests, they can

easily fail to believe *both* their Aspects. All we've got, if you strip away the pizzazz, is someone who wants a little for themselves, and wants a lot for the people around them. You can have that little without trying to mix it into what you think is big.

It is not the ability to imagine oneself as the great conductor of the lost masses that makes you one - it doesn't even mean you'll be *good* at it. The reason Priests and Muses push themselves to these points is because they so often fail to see merit, fail to see *beauty* in their other Aspect; to lash out at the world, or themselves; to serve the world (explicitly), and/or themselves (implicitly). Perhaps this gradiosity can serve a purpose, but it is not their *only* purpose like too many wish for. It really is just those certain breeds of neutral, calm Prosper Priests who show what it's like to harmonize both Aspects: raw contentment in both sides, supportive, distractible, a bit of a yes-man, and personally satisfied by nothing but a funny movie and a fidget spinner. Yes, they will still be Attuned to the people in front of them and walk back on a lot of things, but that's part of the deal - the Muse impulse is an ocean, and the Priest impulse is the anchor. You will *always* care a great deal what other people think of you, and the ability to say a flat "No" to any of that is not some destiny to reject all of it. You just need to find what works for you, set reasonable goals, and balance that against the rest. Muses tell everyone they'd be better off without them, Priests struggle to control the narrative and everyone's attention, but both of these are missteps from someone striking at the other part of themselves - and *yes*, your *perception of people* only belongs to *you*. Every speech or assessment comes from *you*, and that *never* meant you were a genius empath or god's chosen - just prone to assumptions. Take a breath, settle down, and focus on friends. You don't need to manipulate them so they won't leave, or leave them because you think they should (or will). You're okay. You're enough. Don't doubt people who say so, and don't keep measuring yourself to strangers or "society". You can sing their praises, but you have to write your own story.

If I ask you to imagine a Priest of Heart, what do you picture?

Come on. We've been here awhile, haven't we? We've learned a thing or two on how people work. You've been paying attention, you can ballpark some conceptions, right?

Here's a freebie: Shinji's dad, from Evangelion. Oh yes, that familiar typecasting of Priests as calculating overlords, but certainly a *valid* mapping of it all; you can't say he didn't do it all for love, can you? Or, well, maybe that makes more sense after a full viewing of the show - but hey, not everyone is going to weigh all that symbolic catharsis worth enduring multiple seasons worth of sexualizing teenagers, and I can't blame them for that. Anime, am I right?

I've known two, personally. One of them I met on an MMO in the roleplaying community; our characters had some cute little flirting, but, after enough conversations off the stage, I realized what I was looking at, and came to the conclusion I would rather not perform such emotional intimacy with someone that reminiscent of my father. Politely, diplomatically, respectfully, in full overthinking of all the minutia of my every typed letter, I explained that I was no longer comfortable with our imaginary characters smooching - and they *fucking snapped*. The abridged version of all that dirty laundry is, hopefully, predictable: it apparently wasn't *logical* for the two to break up, that my *reasoning* wasn't sound, that their character would *literally die* from heartbreak - jeez, I mean you write that into your established lore, how much

more of a red flag can you get? We had a few arguments over the course of a week or two, always with them stressing the door was open to go back to how things were, before it escalated to a full raving tantrum; passion and obsession, choices and consequences, a rigged game of absolutes I refused to play, and a perfect demonstration of why I wanted my distance in the first place.

Again, if you are to imagine a Priest of Heart, especially based on the cliches and sad averages of Priests, this is textbook. But, like I said, I know two personally; mentioned him earlier, from the confusion that he introduced himself as a Bard. He's an interesting guy - and a good one. A friend I trust enough to not watch my back around, not worry when something's going to blow up. He's honest. He's taken the best lessons from this system he could, and knows how to speak for himself. Not to take all the credit - he was friendly enough before I met him - but it helps to articulate these things. He flitted between a few potential Classpects, and his own enthusiasm in exploring that was, somewhere, Heart-y. I'll still hit him with the proverbial water spritzer if he gets too supervillainy ("Mr Freeze did nothing wrong"), but he can reel himself in already. He knows what he's capable of, good and bad, and is probably less likely to step out of line and hurt someone than I am.

My point is, he is no anomaly; no lucky draw of the cards, no genetic lottery or spared trauma, far from it. He's a Priest, dealt the same hand as all the monsters we've spoken of, and he made it *work*. Anyone can, is my point. Anyone can get the fuck over themselves and their self pity and the myths they've held on to since they were 14, and figure this shit out. I'm not saying it'll fix all your problems, not saying it'll get you bitches and money and success, but it will at *least* stop you from doubling down on dead ends. With any Class, Priest or otherwise, it pays to know your own bullshit; you have to know it is first to make it anything else.

It still feels like all the insane world-domination stuff Priests either joke about, long for, or disasterously chase is just...well, half is Muse-isms, as no matter how kind or cruel, why do you even care what other people think? It's just the Priest impulse and Aspect in isolation that I don't think *has* to go down that road. It's a small flickering flame of self-interest, and, if its anything like the flames with Time, you just gotta come to terms with it. Have some fun. Not be worried about who will judge you for it. Self-interest should be judged by the self, and not mythologized until you aren't even doing things you *want*, compared to what you think you're "supposed" to want. It's that smallness, and the Muse Aspect's worldly longings, that I think makes the common problem, when it makes more sense that the Muse Aspect simply helps you accept everything outside your personal joys - neither has to attack the other, they just fill the empty space. Hopefully, this will help make it easier to deal with. Ideally. Please see a therapist regardless.

But if you *do* want some outside validation, I'm gonna do the best I can.

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Sage among the simple; shepherd to the sheep; mortal surrounded by Gods - wreathed or would-be. Reality shifted in schism of practiced praxis of paradox, packed into patsies to make it possibly palpable but, perchance, lacking in perspective priced at the privilege of participating. Indignant? Irrelevant to the task of telling the story and rendering myth digestible. Setting up shop with sermons, serendipitous, serene, is the Siphon; the Witness; the Interpreter; the Priest. Bound to the earth and unable to reach, you preach; purpose in the paper, a blueprint in the manuscript, and a crusade on the horizon. The Kingdom is fractured by false idols and weak to evil in men's hearts, but cede to salvation and see a nation purified in kindest conquest. Selfless savior, not so presumptive to serve blood as wine - not when there's costs to be cut on ink. Followers flock to your pious example, susceptible to what's laced in the letters: hate and fear and want, severed from your flesh but writhing in every word written. The further you reach, the emptier you are, as the world is remade to your image *and* your imperfections. Are you a demon? No, more demeaning - only human. Oh, that in service to the heavens, you only hoped to purify yourself...or was it

spite, that you hoped to infect everything else? The scripture stricken out and rewritten by a chaste chasing perfection, but when are you going to realize man isn't a pale imitation, but comparison? Sin is simpler than just admitting life is complicated; fractured by design, but never undone. There is little more human than yearning...so maybe you do have a right to represent. In pen and prayer, in confession and forgiveness, the paradigm rewritten to whatever we want: shameless, selfish, sanctified. Forgive the human you are and live among, praise the divine pleasure of being one, and it still might not be enough...but in good company, you won't notice.

"Absence diminishes little passions and increases great ones, as wind extinguishes candles and fans a fire." - Walt Whitman

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SCRIBES are a medley of many traits associated with many Classes, idly drifting (or excitedly pinballing) between the ones that catch their fancy. They are ***extremely*** factional, firmly defining themselves by their politics, favourite media, and psychological quirks, all while just as firm in deciding what the correct and moral way to interact with these labels is. Drawn to excitement and new ideas, Scribes quickly and firmly latch on to what works for them and theirs, without always giving much concern to precedent or collateral. While the initial hope is usually in the ballpark of "healing", "happiness", or "justice", the impulsivity of it breeds schisms, and many of the varied permutations of Scribes come from how they address this; numb dismissal, comedic de-commitment, anxious surrender, or a fierce shutdown of all criticism - even to the people the Scribe means to benefit. Good intentions and noble aspirations come in a myriad of different flavors, all liable to change based on the next flight of fancy or close friend in their life...but, all the clearest signatures are everything they don't want to talk about. Scribes experience burnouts and a "lack of spoons" so often that they're often the only ones thinking they'll climb out of it. It handicaps their empathetic efforts, swimming out to save the drowning without the strength to swim back. Likewise, they're prone to skip research and fill in the gaps with intuition, compromising their persuasiveness as anything from uninspiring, hypocritical, or outright divorced from reality. Again, these are all things Scribes might try to laugh off, shrug off, or bite their tongue and swallow back...but to commit to one direction at exclusion of all others fails to facilitate the genuine aspirations bubbling beneath it all.

From the Priest section, it should be clear how I believe a bulk of the comic is dedicated to Hussie's exploration of their Class. Of course, it is still quite likely they silently decided on the name of "King", and as this is the AFAB Paired Class to that AMAB one, "Queen" would be a shoe-in (under those terms alone). Now I've already made it clear I disagree with the hierarchy

and gendering of the names, but whether you like them or not, Homestuck's overabundance of chess imagery gives some credence to my perspective; after all, we ARE closing up with a total of 16 archetypes under 2 teams. Of course, that would be a rather narcissistic way to organize personality types. Priests and Scribes can hold a great deal of presence and influence, but not always, and I profusely object to the implication that only they have the capability to do so, just the same as the Masters (who may or may not be Rooks in this situation (shit what does this say about castling)). Given the alarming amount of Classes this would now qualify as "pawns", the comparison only becomes more gross the more it's considered. The Classpect system works well when everyone is a hero in their own right. I find it hard not to imagine Hussie understood part of that, but patted themselves on the back too hard for what they wanted **their** right to be. If you want to organize your friends to the board, I'd recommend voting in who you want to be a monarch, but you don't even have to do that.

The reason I'm bringing this up is because, assuming these Classes **do** correlate to the Prospit and Derse chess kingdoms, even a little, Hussie may have actually demonstrated this particular Class after all, right in plain sight.

Scribes have their personality, politics, irritations, and anecdotes all smushed together into a single worldview - yet, this isn't their focus. Whatever highs and lows they've got to their personal story, Scribes are more fixated on the greater machinations of the world around them, in all the minutia of who deserves help and who deserves blame. Just as Priests resolve the inner argument of a Prince, Scribes solidify all the fuzzy maybes of the Bard impulse, with more conclusions and less confusion: to see their Aspect **conquered** that all might reap the spoils, or expecting it to **conquer** for them. Again, Scribes latch on to only the ideas and interpretation they care about; playfully, only for their own sake, and no one gets to take away their fun; passionately, that those they care about are deserving of love and protection, no matter what *anyone*, of *any* rank or reputation says; apathetically, that there is no cause to move them or joke that would force a laugh; intellectually, that the answers are all obvious, and it's a chore to explain that to anyone confused; wrathfully, that anything less than their path of virtue is worth a lecture, and outright malcontents (as only the Scribe determines) are deserving of every cruelty imaginable. Scribes aren't inclined to a burden of responsibility to argue these points, as they are either "infallible facts and rules that existed beforehand", or "what-you-gonna-do-about-it"s. A Scribe's Aspect, while comparable to a Priest's shriveled secrets, is certainly not hidden: it is uncompromising justice, ruthless pragmatism, a tight embrace of respite, a thin red carpet, an all-consuming utopia, a tense harmony, a peaceful stalemate, a hostage situation, a first and last attempt, and all the wistful fantasies they can't quite seem to fit together.

I'm 70% certain Snowman/Black Queen is a Scribe - or Queen if you want to nurse that hypothetical, or *Milf* if you really must (stop gendering things). Irregardless Snowman DID display Mind-y powers (Page 3840-3847, in the header). Now I ain't saying she *couldn't* be one of the other Classes, or some Class-less mind avatar. I *will* say I don't get why those panels exist if Hussie wants to say "Space" now - fuck is this, dementia? Just, humour me...she *is* forcing everyone else's actions into a brick ceiling of cause/effect just by existing, isn't she? Like if you try to do anything else, no, the universe fucking dies, correct? Like even if you don't like the verb "conquer", this is definitely the most reactive Adaptation essential inevitability of super destruction? I mean there's forcing Jack into those stupid hats too.

Look, theory aside, these are real people - though I am certainly more twitchy in regards to a sensation that I can't talk about something. Sometimes it does *feel* like the whole universe will explode if I do. I certainly can't live with that, even if that is my BPD talking...but, I

concede, a lot of Scribes *also* feel like the universe will explode if they push on something. I empathize. I am also plainly observing and stating that it's mostly projection and recreating environments, but, they're not *trying* to. We're all guilty of stuff like that, even me, but Scribes seem the furthest from the middle ground that makes it easier to branch out. They're very malleable creatures, as much as they're also very much not. There's still a middle ground there, but to stop that pendulum from swinging between extremes, you gotta pull it down with twice the force...and the first step of that is if they even want to.

Scribes are the Passive counterpart to Priests, and the same principle holds: that they are *capable* of being real pieces-of-work, should not eclipse the good deeds of those who are either trying hard not to be, or may not have even seriously considered the possibility of what they could be. That they can be difficult to motivate or redirect is, itself, not a fault; even to the more outwardly confrontational, being rude doesn't mean you don't have a point. Course, you don't *have* to be, and no one can be right everytime, can they? Even with the best of intentions, Scribes can create tense atmospheres in the wake of who they take issue with, how easily, and on how thin a thread. Inherently, the Scribe impulse does not need complicated arguments for its judgements, but acknowledging the subjectivity of that perspective can feel less tempting compared to assuming the world *truly is* black and white. Scribes can show fierce loyalty, but are prone to blot out (or straight up deny) the inglamorous details of those they champion, or *how* they're championing, or flip to scathing dismissal from one wrong move and cut their closest bonds. All of this while Scribes are often in a glacial state of self-improvement, aware of (some of) their issues but stagnating on solutions. Scribes have the resolve to forge their own beauty in the face of the whole world, but that same spark leads too many to fester in flimsy justifications and tenuous arguments on why that same world should totally punish anyone who uses the wrong type of toothpaste. Not all Scribes, not all the time...but even if it's only played for a laugh, it's still something they're capable of. Besides, as discussed, they don't need a whole lot of grist to start swinging.

For a good, long time, I swore off making any close connections with Scribes altogether. I am no longer of that conviction, but I have not forgotten all the reasons that lead me to it. I have lost old friends, and people I only knew for a couple weeks. I've lost people before even they admitted to themselves that things were through. I've lost everything I gave those people, and all I was left with was data. It took awhile to place that this wasn't particularly angry Rogues, or particularly angry Sylphs, or even a particularly angry Knight (which might be an AMAB Class). But I connected those scars with the older ones from before I even got into all this Classpecting bullshit, and from that, I personally regarded Scribes as (ironically) a write-off.

If you are a Scribe, then...well, you're not likely to admit that in the first place. Like always, I will do my best to make my points, whether that convinces you or maybe just the people around you. Let me address one argument off the bat: "You're just describing AFABs with autism/ADHD/etc." I'll say again, Scribes love their labels - but I've met Witches with ADHD, Thieves and Mages with autism, and I'm a Page with both. Classes just don't match up with disorders 1-1. More likely, it's just that when we process what makes us different, we assume it's squarely from how we *KNOW* we're different. Sure, I could tell you how much being autistic has shaped my perspective, but it shaped other peoples in far less "meat genocide in moderation" directions.

I'm not a therapist - but neither are most Scribes. It's never stopped them from yelling in my ear about this stuff; hell, one freaked out and told me to delete everything I wrote and never tell anyone. I'm not going to do that. I know who that benefits. And I still did have one who read over all the same stuff and said "It's harsh, but true". Lost her in a couple weeks too,

just cause I said "Scribes are AFAB" more firmly than I should have. Then it was every argument I warned about. Maybe all those warnings only matter to non-Scribes. Maybe just me.

If this sounds like you, don't waste your time writing a thesis on why I'm a danger to society and a dogshit human being. You're not going to bring anything to the table I haven't heard before. You're a cliché. So am I. I'm still trying to help, but I will admit yours is the Class I have the most trouble with. If you're a friend of a Scribe, I'm not saying you can't be. I am not without bias - but that doesn't mean I'm writing fiction that can be written off entirely. You can have some answers without having all the answers. You can have enough of an understanding to act upon it, within reason - reason we decide. I hope, past all the black and white I've written about and seen time and time again, you can see that. This is still an appeal. You don't have to take it. Doesn't mean I'm wrong - especially if the only metric is needing to convince you.

Prospit Scribes carry themselves with a graceful calm, but you don't have to know them long to realize it's more accurate to call them "unimpressed". They're here to help, at least always initially; good moods are as conditional as described, but even the fallout can be brief. In fact, outside of some key moments of passion, their Scribey judgements and theories aren't really defended in the moment - either from genuine indifference, or the ignoble assumption that being right is a given and maybe they can just keep insisting on that until everyone's too tired to disagree. Prospit Scribes are prone to responses of "Okay", "Sure", and "Alright", reflecting either, again, genuine indifference, or bare-minimum misdirection until you leave the room. Fact of the matter is, Prospitarian straightforwardness defangs a lot of the worst case scenarios of a Scribe, where the difficulty justifying and performing any elaborate pretenses means you've either got someone transparent with their limitations, or someone *very bad at lying*. However, the double-edge of this variable is that being comfortable with one's rough edges does not immediately translate to contented; whatever criticisms one can make of the Prospit Scribes who pantomime the cherished paragon they want to be, the drive to be one at all is non-negotiable - and not insurmountable. Even the most unapproachable stonewall of a Prospit Scribe is still liable to find some gentle words of consolation spill out of their mouth at some point; while it's not as bad as thinking their presence itself is a gift to lowly mortals, it's not going to move them forward if they write it all off as a fluke.

Not sure what you could say of Homestuck's Questant; maybe Hussie's experience was far different than mine, or too coloured by an expectation of what the "Queen" Class ought to be, or maybe she simply wasn't meant to be. I'm not saying she couldn't be (I personally gander she is), but we don't spend much time with her in the comic, so it's difficult to tell what one can extrapolate and what's just projection - even down to her "vibe".

Still, I've known plenty. In the margins, I wonder about some people I used to speak to but, sort of fell out with - and there is at least something to say about how, they never caused me trouble. Were even sweet from time to time. Another was a friend-of-a-friend, where things went quite poorly. As is usual for Scribe horror stories, too close too fast, then the cold shoulder when I say something out of line; easy come, easy go. I've let them know I'm still around if they need anything. Haven't heard back.

Yet one more has stuck around to time of writing, and was the reason I cut my "no getting close to Scribes" rule. Not intentionally, so to say, but they picked up I was keeping my distance while I was squirmy as to why. They pressed on it, so between that and the fact we had mutual friends and games to play, they're...just, kind of the only Scribe I have as a close friend now. I don't regret that, and not just because I know they'll read what I write here; genuinely, I'm happy to have them close, and I know damn well they've stuck their neck out for the people around them.

I'd rather not get into media examples just yet. Prospits especially vary a bit.

Derse Scribes are...alot of things. Dersite neuroticism kicks every conniption listed into high gear, unable to escape a palpable unease under whatever mask they wear. While numbed shrugs and aimlessness is more of a quirk with Prospit Scribes, Derse Scribes regard it as a failure state. Some will try to make that work - a silly little gremlin insisting you shouldn't expect anything substantial - but many others will take to verbose and firm (or just firm) explanations on who they are and what they believe in. Of course, therein lies the rub: Derse Scribes are still Scribes, and the causes they get fired up about are either fleeting or so selective it's hard *not* to be a hypocrite one way or another. Ruthless pragmatist, compassionate protector, inspired artist, trained teacher, supportive sidekick, all with *cracks* and *holes* and *exceptions* from someone who liked the outline of the archetype more than the substance of it - and would appreciate if you didn't point that out. Scribes are very fluid people, but it's the Derse ones who so regularly insist they *aren't*, confusing impression and substance so long they may not know the difference. Whether it's broken promises, easy answers with no viability, whiffed empathy from jumping to conclusions and misunderstanding what friends have in common, this self-defeating artifice corrodes aspirations beyond cosplay. The aforementioned goofball routine is from a Derse Scribe trying to avoid all this, not trusting their impulses and insisting you shouldn't either...but they're not going away, and aren't unsalveagable either. Whether lashing outward or inward, the damage done only makes it harder to catch what they're chasing.

I have known a great deal of Derse Scribes in my life. Usually pretty close, up until they're not. Look, I can't pretend I'm an easy person to get along with, and my preferences and relationships shouldn't be used as a measuring stick for "agreeable-disagreeable" people - not that I won't stand by what I wrote here, mind you. Everything that matters is subjective, and we burn so much energy arguing over the meaningless objective anyways...

Media examples are actually easier here. Chie from Persona 4 (Timebound) is pitch perfect in attitude, and really makes something of herself across the game too. Kez from Infinity Train is right in personality to the "goofball" types, while fairly showing how that can oscillate with rudeness and disinterest. Hell, Veronica from New Vegas is probably the only Scribe Class that actually IS a Scribe in profession too - funny coinkidink that, not being why I decided on the name. I originally referenced Zoe from Monster Prom as a Prospit example, but she definitely belongs here; in case you haven't noticed, my real life sources of information are difficult to talk to. Wasn't even sure what marked a Prospit or Derse variant at first...christ, I prefer Priests on that front.

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INVERISON (PRELUDE): As you might've worked out through the process of elimination, Scribes are the Passive Inversion to the Lord Class - which is not flattering. A Lord's Passive side provides the snap judgements, tentative tutoring, and contradictory justifications that support their enlarged ego. Flip the priorities, and you've got all these aspirations to be practical, selfless, supportive, and succinct...all of which, unfortunately, are easily sidelined by that same ego, regardless of whether it even feels like

it's doing them any favours. Scribes have very firm ideas on their personal identity, but as the *inverted* component, it's usually not a pretty picture. Even if it takes shape as a deep well of self-loathing (which it might not), the Lord impulse comes with constants, propelling Scribes forward to trust their instincts over all else and failing to read the room because they're too busy aggressively patting themselves on the back for doing just that. Alongside that, Scribes still have a Lord's temper, too easily straying into the same frayed justifications for it. Lords fixate on "You have to love what I love", where Scribes veer to "You have to hate what I hate" - it's the same shtick, but it also speaks to a Scribe's central identity tied to this conquered Aspect that lets them down as much as Priests. Scribes are the side of Lords that can express hurt, longing, inferiority, and trust - but all so tentative, primed to hit back, run away, or numbly shrug through anything they read as a threat. They're backed into the same corner they'll back anyone else into, struggling to outmaneuver an Active impulse that'll worm its way through their psyche and rewrite the goalposts until it gets what it wants *somehow*. Lords can be a lot to deal with, and while Scribes are the *mathematically exact* counter-argument to deal *with* them, it's not easy to do 24/7.

RIVALRY (FASHIONABLY LATE): Harsher edges and a louder voice do not change that Scribes are, innately, purely, the equal match to Muses - **catalytic** to an aspect that they feel fights without them, or at least ought to. They reach for the same heights, seek the same breadth of audience, and get about as sour if you refuse to play along. All that's "uppity" about Sylphs and Bards is magnified, but, fitting to the other Tier 4s, the absolutes hide the argument; the solution to your woes will arrive perfect, without brainstorming or justifying. Course, the obvious difference is that while Muses excel in bluffing around these shortcomings, Scribes...don't. Rather than a Priest's secret Aspect, Scribes are more "stillborn"; whether they believe their views subversively revolutionary, or ontologically omnipresent, convincing people is the hardest part. The apathetic who are already disappointed in you, the preachers who lash out at all criticism, the giggling who take nothing seriously, the sad wet cats backed into a corner, are all varying cope of the same burn: they wanted to save the world, they gave it their best shot, and it didn't work how they wanted it to - or at all. Imperatively, Muses are the same amount of bullshit, smudged evidence, and ignored exceptions...but, they believe it easily - a duty, but not a chore. Maybe the better unifier between Scribes and Muses is "**wounded**", pushed by impulses that only make it worse.

I've said dismissive things regarding Scribes. Mostly in regards to how I'd keep my distance *personally*, but, so long as it's in this book broadcasted to the public...well, there is a responsibility in what I say and who it will reach. It all paints a picture, and I am not blameless if it resembles a mugshot.

Still. I've taken some deep cuts, and I got friends who took 'em too. Not always from nothing, but so often disproportionate. It is a delicate act to try and meet this all in the middle. Sift

the data from the pain, but they come from the same source; play too diplomatic, and you only say what they want to hear. And then I get mad I'm even playing this dance at all - but throwing it in their face *is* part of the dance, just like with Witches and Knights and all the other self-sabotage. People bring their pain with them, setting the terms for their friendships without even realizing it most of the time. I cannot describe Scribes if I coddle, and I can't win them over if I vent - so meet me in my middle of the road, and maybe some of this will land.

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DISCREPANCIES: Scribes have an incredibly fluid sense of identity (if not *expression*), and a penchant for latching on to shiny things as much as Priests. This habit of saying "I get it" when they don't get it, of trying to finish someone's sentences incorrectly...well, naturally, they probably already have opinions of what Class they are, and are twice as likely to say they're some variation of "non-applicable". If we're being entirely honest, their most convincing argument for being another Class is simply the confidence they display in justifying it to others, and not their actual mannerisms. Priests are fluid like still water, quietly seeping into cracks and reflecting back what they see; Scribes are more of a river rapid, too frantic to hold shape. A pinnacle of adaptation, they see the world as it could be so clearly, that what it *was* is so easy to forget or disregard. Likewise, this applies inward to the role they feel they have to play *to* that world. They cultivate the image of themselves without precedent or tradition...but there's issues if you only pick the parts of the blueprints you like, still as ashamed of themselves as Priests can be. Scribes are a helluva' lot easier to spot than Priests, but they've got a vested interest in not wanting those blemishes recognized, let alone to imply it defines them. So, the same message as with Priests: however much it hurts to acknowledge, however unsympathetic this document may be to the worst offences, you gotta' own these things.

Gremlins to girlbosses - bubbly to bad bitch. It can feel like a catch-all for a couple of cliches (which are best to detach from femininity) when you set them all up next to each other, but it's coming from the same place, and I swear I'll do my best to illustrate that. With everything they're likely to have gone through, I'm sure an argument is "No, I have to be X Class but hardened by trauma." Unfortunately, Classpects ARE our trauma.

PROPHETS: Mages are literally the furthest thing from Scribes, which has been reflected in this document itself. The nature of Inversion does make for a bit of confusion though: a backseat Lord impulse can be treated with enough mundanity to resemble a Mage's faith in themself, just as a Scribe's tumultuous appeals with others can resemble the Mage's iffy and situational Heir habits. Of course, a Scribe who's self aware that people aren't always going to like what they're selling is still a Scribe, Passive Class, very interested in selling their ideas to at least *someone*, rather than find fulfillment acting alone upon those ideas without company or witnesses. Even if we factor out the very particular stoic affect of Mages, or factor in how they can be stubbornly self-righteous towards incorrect - or outright *dangerous* - notions, these beliefs are *very* personal in *every* regard, all of which are made easier by avoiding people. Mages are very inward-looking

people, whose path of virtue would benefit others even if they're the only one to walk it (blah blah Mage/Heir relationship). If the whole world won't abide them, if no one else can meet those standards...all of that can be *ideal* to their main-character-syndrome. For Scribes, moving the world is a fixation, and they're either going to be doing their damndest, or uncomfortably unfulfilled that they can't. To the most resigned hermit of a Scribe, their dismissals won't mince words on why it's a big deal you *should* care - they're just too tired to convince you. Mages are sort of deliberately small-picture kind of people when you put it in comparison, and that's not always a good thing.

Double Inverse and all that. I understand I stole/borrowed Meulin's half-title, but I was running out of words as is. I still really like the idea of the written word to contrast a Master's music, and you could keep that gimmick if you personally choose to fall back on the King/Queen dynamic I'm still fairly certain Hussie must've circled around...or, whatever third option you came up with, so long as we're clear we're all talking about Class #16, Lord Inverse.

I did mention awhile ago that Meulin does display an erratic Magehood I've only seen situationally in real life - Heir side gets pent up, I suppose. Even then, I think the information above still establishes what she is and isn't.

For the same reason, "Seer" doesn't really fit either. Between Prospit Scribes who say what's on their mind once and don't explore further, and the Derse Scribes who may retreat to ridicule themselves, being an "investigative seeker of unbiased truth" is surprisingly contextual aesthetic for Scribes. Real Seers are very adaptable, to the point that even their Witchy side is more flavour than it is fallback. Weaving between wills and exploring the world is all very low-upkeep for them, which is mostly because of the single most important difference between Seers and Scribes: neutrality. Scribes can look and listen as long as they want, but the interest in defining "indefensible acts" and writing off anyone who argues for them is a signature move. Seers are driven to examine people and their actions from a multitude of different perspectives, to the point that their actual disagreements can become buried in the name of principle - not the flat silence of a Scribe stuffing back hellfire, but the distantly aforementioned issue of Seers hanging around really sketchy people, and condoning far too much. The more you line up personal lives and patterns, the less any of this sticks, and absolutely needing definitive answers (especially on simple titles) is one more Scribe signature. Look, neither Class is about some innate "intelligence", they just measure beliefs: how you process it, value it, preach it, that's all that's going on here. Seers have a reputation for accuracy because their beliefs are less likely to interfere with information - and, in turn, they are less likely to interfere with people making very bad ideas. Scribes like their labels - given and worn, branded and banners - but beyond how that itself is antithetical to Seer thinking, it shouldn't distract from the many ways that good needs doing, and in what ways Scribes specialize in.

You want to be a bastion of knowledge, I made sure this name works for that too. You just don't get fluttery prophetic visions and hunches - you get stone and papyrus. According to me. It is meant with the best of intentions.

Had a long argument with someone who introduced themselves as a Seer of Void. They were insistant. They were equally insistant when they retook the extended zodiac test a day after meeting me and got "Mind". Like...like the same argument of "no this is TOTALLY who i am you're not LISTENING you don't KNOW MY STORY" to two entirely different Aspects. I mean that speaks for itself, really. With what I had written, they were a kid in the candy store saying "Am I a Mage or Seer!? :D Both fit???", cherry-picking sentences I wrote while refusing to read the second or third paragraphs. I sent them my early draft of Scribes and got "You're just describing AFABs with mental disorders. >:|"...and I hope I've explained enough to show why that was a pretty definitive self-checkmate. Like I said at the start of this document, every nerve pinched is one more hint to what your Class is. Truth be told, I can believe they're a Scribe of Void - would make sense if there's a Lord of Light kicking in the back, writing a thesis for why I'm a narrow-minded bigot oppressing their basic humanity with my backwards views. I've kept that conversation saved. I'm not an easy person to get along with. But I know Scribes.

In in the interest of fairness, Kankri does muddle things a little. His Seer qualities are there, but Blood's obsession with suffering and oaths makes him more accusing and intervening to his friends...aaaaaaand he's also 50% meme. Really, as a living parody of "SJW" rant-lecture types, this all segways into something I've been dancing around: Scribes are absolutely the face of that caricature, and even I am not above reductively calling them the "angry feminist personality" in certain contexts. I'm sure a few Sylphs, Pages, and even Seers have also contributed to that stereotype, but even then the bulk of that internet boogeyman is just the usual crypto-fascists trying to demoninize left wing politics. I've met right-wing Scribes, there aren't any rules on who goes where, trust me.

MAGICIANS: The Witch staple of "playful fun that can fall apart when pushed too hard against reality" *does* have some commonality to compare, but to be so reductive misses the (admittidly fairly uniform) nuances and misdirection that defines the Class. A Witch's Aspect and identity are a personal one, balanced to a Seer's idle co-existence and calm curiosity; Witches might think they are trouble, but they are not *looking* for trouble. They can and will surf the wills of others without ever giving the inclination they'd protest, and even snapping into the Witch-Spiral-Speech_(tm) rarely errs from the central justification of "You'll be better off without me". As we've gone over, the Scribe staple is grinding conversations to a halt to decide what is and isn't valid, where trying to let things go is difficult - just a few more pushes (real or imagined) and we're on to the Scribe-Spite-Speech_(tm) of "You just hate me for having an opinion". A Witch's personal opinions may struggle to be argued against others, but they also never have to be; even a Witch's closest confidants will rarely know all their true thoughts and hidden agendas, and Witches themselves frequently prefer it that way. Scribes don't do things halfway (at least, not without huge personal growth), and trying to play themselves off or withdraw from the world is usually because there's burnt bridges in recent memory. Like with Priests and Princes, a more malleable interpretation of oneself doesn't change how much Scribes have in common with Bards, and that's really the more apt comparison for their brand of mischief and the purpose underlying it.

I have trouble telling these two apart online. In real life, it's no contest: Scribes have a particular body language, affect in their voice, and moments of impulse, but it all gets fuzzier if they have time to collect themselves and type. Prospit Scribes and Prospit Witches blur in withdrawl, always not saying *something*. I mean I get Witches, but I've been thrown off a few times realizing that I've caught a Scribe in the same dance, who's getting increasingly irritated

at not knowing the moves. They don't like losing, and too often everything is seen as a competition. I've made it no secret I like hanging around Witches - they're fun. Cute. But they're playing their own games, and if you aren't paying attention, you won't notice how often they make sure they win no matter what you do.

Scribes and Heirs mark the ends of the Passive-Adaptation branch - new perspectives, constructive criticism, collective problem solving. With everything described however, it should be clear why Scribes are very much their own Class (and certainly not *addicted* to discontent). We can all envy an Heir whose wise guiding hand makes people look to them naturally and without contest, but that's ignoring the drawbacks and collateral. Heirs frequently mistrust their friends capabilities to the point of infantilizing them, and still hesitate so often in dire situations because the Heir impulse is seen as a false mask. Whatever identity issues a Scribe might be dealing with, they are either vague or firm, not firmly vague (as the *ideal end point* no less) as Heirs work out only the next step. Heirs are whatever the situation needs them to be, whoever their friends see them as, and breaking away from that into Mage isolation is not telegraphed, advertised, or negotiable. Scribes are - however worldly selfless the aspiration - themselves, and trying to be there for everyone is very take-it-or-leave-it, and without the brooding "grand-exile-from-my-previous-life" shtick. In the interest of fairness, Heirs are not above pulling *some* variation of diplomatic silence or "I'm still totally right but if it makes you feel better I'll move on"...but that makes the clearest tell who they are on a good day. Scribes do it all for different reasons with different ennui, creating a recognizably different reputation. The title of Heir can be enviable from its implication of righteous superiority, but the Class earns that name *precisely because* they prefer it as an implication - and if they don't, then they probably went off that Faux-Lord deep end, where the finer line to draw between them and Scribes is Heirs' unshakeable refusal to ever be seen as a victim. Scribes seem far more capable of processing what hurt them, and that can be a powerful tool of empathy that Heirs won't cultivate.

It's popular culture that frames Heir personalities as "default good guy hero leader". Not from nothing, but it was and never will be anything definitive - just culture of yesteryear. Don't hold yourself to those standards, or think they cannot be challenged.

SERVANTS: Scribes can find themselves swimming in self-deprecation and awkward appeals, Derse ones especially so. There's a "stop and start" confidence similar to Page habits, but moreso their reputation, and you lose alot of important details if you reduce it all to "doormats" (even if we do kinda deserve it). In all the awkward attempts to help and inspire, a Scribe can easily over-mythologize their own self-loathing into a Page-y affect - yet, Pages are *still* only a notch off from Mages, and those familiar internal mechanics make for an important distinction past the optics. The lines might be a bit fuzzy between Active and Passive, but can't change which comes first; Pages are chronically cautiously ambitious, always chasing something and rarely making that a secret. Being a helper is at least a *little* more important than who they help, but never without a delicate balance of

both - mutually beneficial, quid pro quo, "everybody wins". And that's the catch: if a Scribe is acting like a quintessential Page (a bundle of anxiety and open cowardice), then their efforts to help others *lack* that polite foot-in-the-door selfishness. If they've got a healthy ego, then you shouldn't expect all the hesitation and compromise Pages never saw *wholly* as a problem in the first place. Let's not pretend Pages aren't above preening instead of listening to those around them - but in doing so, it is a focus on personal talents in fields they're actively competing in, where the glory or benefits are to be actively reaped. If a Scribe is feeling uppity, 1: They're channeling their inner Lord, and aren't really "competing" so much as "perpetually enjoying their uncontested laurels of excellence", and 2: Unlike true Lords, they tend to weirdly gloss over their own bragging, fixating on how it all justifies and qualifies their (sometimes very unrelated) advice, gracious beacon of wisdom that they are. The journey of self-improvement for Pages is fairly route.

Don't come sniffing around my neck of the woods because "most powerful class" sounds pretty - especially if you define power as "nobody gets to tell me what to do". Sure, I'd like to cut loose and tell people to stop breathing my air, but do you know why I don't? Because it's not *constructive* - because there isn't a single soul on earth you could put in front of me that I wouldn't try to nudge to be more efficient in whatever they aspire to, more cogniscent of the broken myths they nurse. It doesn't matter how badly they've hurt me before (though I've got enough self respect I won't be too patient about it), and hell it doesn't even really matter if they're *currently* trying to hurt me; you realize how often I've openly tried to improve someone's insults against me because the only thing I'm insulted by is how brazenly sloppy it all is? Shit, helps to know I'm not entirely alone in that.

Anyways, that kind of insistant optimism and utter fetishization of self-improvement is a Page's idea of power, and we already know what a Lord's is. As is usually the case with Inversion, you're already sitting on your own solutions.

Knights are a fairly apt comparison, if in result and not ingredients. Knights and Scribes both have a (roughly) static view of what they offer to people, and the stress of keeping that up creates hard (and often rude) snaps to their Inverse. It's important to state that just because these are two different Classes is not to devalue the stress and strain either places on the individual - however, still two very different Classes. Knights are only a notch up past Seers after all, and what they condone and accept in others is still alot; the ability to snap into Thief traits and reject abuse is still from someone who often *encourages* a little (or a lot) abuse to feed their martyring instincts, and feels natural (if not comfortable) handling a large workload. Even at their best, a Scribe's Aspect is still not really a motivating, physical thing; while it's usually quite the sore spot, most Scribes are terribly lethargic at physical work, long projects, and scheduling. This overpromising narrows the type of "protector" a Scribe might want to be, usually manifesting as "I believe in you, you're perfect, end of story" sentiments - and most of their "indignant rebellion" is from people asking for more. Another tell is how they latch on to people, since Knights have a general code of conduct that even holds to complete strangers. While Knights do pick favourites from time to time, Scribes default to it, orbiting a chosen few with fascination and/or loyalty to the

point they rarely have time for anyone else. Besides, as we've discussed, Scribes can just as readily preach their Aspect without deferring to anyone in the room, which is far more of an alien concept for Knights.

Scribes write, Knights fight. You wanna do good, I am trying my damndest to deify the good you already wanted to do. If I sound defensive, I am. Being thorough in my arguments has gotten me this far. Like I said, I'm still not too optimistic about reaching a Scribe with this. Just, fingers crossed, visceral and accurate, like I have before.

OUTLAWS: For the same reasons we've discussed in Knights, Scribes being confused as Thieves can make a bit of sense. However, this aforementioned "indignant rebellion" is against the razor-specific Scribe obligations, meaning we are *not* looking at a Thief - we are looking at an Inverted Lord, free of its few shackles. Casually boastful of their achievements, intelligence, and influence, these Scribes put themselves at the peak of "pleased with themselves". Where what tempers them into being tolerable is just that they're not all that motivated to convince you; they won't rub it in your face so much as radiate from across the room, looking at their phone. There are still some altruistic gestures, but only to their timetable, and it could still take awhile for them to shift to one of the other listed states. Now, like with true Lords, it is a coinflip if these antics are believed by the person saying them or not, but the totality of the presumed worldview is distinctly Tier 4. Thiefy-Scribes are invoking the Lord playbook, flaunting a victory lap in life meant to shut down any inconvenient accusations...but even the smuggest Thieves aren't expecting worship (at least, for too long). Evening out these antics comes with finding Knightly stability in what they provide, and what they stand by...and likewise, for all the rough edges these Scribes might have, they're at least *on the way* to synthesizing the Lord impulse in a healthy way. Better out in the open than whispering underneath the floorboards.

There are a lot of Prospit Scribes out there, but the reason I held off on examples is that pointing to Lumpy Space Princess or Gina Linetti is informative, but contextual.

Rogues, however, are a much finer line to draw. Prospits are easier to parse, but still worth tackling individually on their own merits. Rogues (of any sort) *do* have limits, and past that is something tired, numb, and honest; when the automatic reflex to pat their friends on the back and laugh at all their jokes...stops being automatic, or even in the cards at all. This gets close to Prospit Scribe numbness, so if those Scribes muster some clearer compassionate ambitions, you can get the two to meet in the middle quite convincingly. Of course, if you're paying attention, the actual middle is *Bards*, standing as the true hybrid between "Have you tried doing it this way maybe?" and "Do it this way or whatever I stopped caring". Prospit Rogues and Scribes can come razor thin on the delivery, but not the substance. Dismissive P. Rogues are still cautious not to inconvenience others, or even imply any insult - so if it's not appeasement, it is courteous disconnection. Tender P. Scribes are less courteous and more curt, seeing

principle - even a kindness - in not even humoring the concept of empty pleasantries, including any hesitation in admitting that to people. Prospitarians are straightforward, but still not always clear; true to their instincts, but not always honest in justifications. Whether it helps them or not, whether it helps *others* or not, no matter what evokes these shifting affects and in which contexts and for how long...there remain constants. Even if they feel sour, Rogues don't like to step on toes; even if they're mindful on *where* they step, Scribes do not do so softly.

Many drafts ago, the Rogue section was irredeemably inaccurate, mostly due to a great deal of time spent internalizing the wrong characteristics as "Rogue-isms". I'd wager this is overall a difficult line to draw, but still one I've made worse for myself, and struggle not to pass on to others. There was no avoiding it at first, given Scribes weren't listed in the material that was otherwise working so well. Still, even when I did arrive at this missing classification, I still regarded many friends and fictions as Rogues in...misplaced sympathy, I suppose. I am very critical of people who assign Classpects on such a basis - but believe me, I know I'm not immune to it myself.

I keep circling Max from *Life is Strange*. Rogue, I always *want* to say, but the hard lines of "definitely" don't form in my head. It's hard to tell if it all feels like gossamer in some objective capacity, or if my instincts are still damaged from years of misinformation. In some earlier drafts, I mentioned Jess Black of *Far Cry 5* as a harder-edged Rogue - but, on revision, there's not much ambiguity outside of her being a Scribe. She is loyal, dependable, selfless, and none of that was ever mutually exclusive.

Predictably, everything is more confusing on the Derse end of things. Derse Scribes can be authoritative, ambitious, and accusatory, as much as they can be none of that for years on end. The aforementioned gremlin angle, when tempered with patience and vulnerability, hits *right* on the money to the Derse Rogue affect. Under this shared umbrella of neurotic self-examination and conscious course-correction to one's public and private face, the more obvious discrepancies - such as the ones listed in the Prospit example - do not come easily. Not that there aren't constants, and Scribes are quite concerned with what counts as one; their reasoning of why they are the way they are, the struggle to organize it, the hard limits of what they can't push past, all confessed by an over-apologizing motormouth. Hit a sore spot, and you could eke out something too sour or smug to come from a Rogue's mouth - but even before that point, those personal myths run in some important directions. All this penitence comes from someone struggling with intrusive thoughts, pulls of instinct and passion, something wild and overflowing and **commanding**. Derse Scribes can arrange their primary eccentricities into Rogue-isms, but have little hope in disguising that they are half Lord...yet, so inclined to try. Weighed down by such heavy burdens of self-loathing, as if to cancel out all the potentials (or precedent) of something prideful, wrathful, ruthless - unsubtle in the up-to-11 *insistence* of it all. Even if the details are denied or glossed over, the polar extremes of persona have more in common than what's between them; it takes a Master to even conceptualize such a slave. Pry past a Derse Rogue's bluster, and there is none of this myth-making: quiet guilt to missed opportunities, a numb wound of unworthiness, an arm's length loyalty as a mercy, a smile proportionate to blot it all out. No more, no less, nothing to prove.

It is far, far, far, FAR fucking easier to discern what Class a person is, and *especiallly* these two, if you don't tell them what you're doing. If they know, and especially if they're familiar with this system, then you're stuck. Rogues will be Rogues, and Scribes will be Rogues to the best of their ability, trying to run ahead of where you poke and say "No no no, I TOTALLY get what you're saying, that's TOTALLY me, 150%". Honestly, trying to catch up and appease and gently nudge that kind of enthusiasm...it's, *really* the same shit I have to do with Lords, but pointing that out doesn't win you any points. I swear, there's just a flat fucking limit on what one can do with armchair psychology; that stuff will wind up vague, too easily applicable to too many situations, too easily rationalized and justified. If I can be casually psychotic for a second, sometimes I just wish I could just cut the middle man and dissect someone's brain, in some desperate effort to find that inarguable meat chunk of their soul to wave in front of their eyes.

Scribes like their labels, and even if you're faultless in making sure there are no biases in good or bad, right and wrong...they've still got their baggage. Like I've been saying, Derse Scribes *really* don't like having those Lordisms pointed out - like some kind of guaranteed existential panic at the mere possibility. They need to reason it away, need a pat on the back it ISN'T them and NEVER COULD BE and is MATHEMATICALLY IMPOSSIBLE, and if you don't give them that...they might move on, and, find someone who will. Hell, even Lords themselves will do the same thing, from time to time. I've messed it all up on plenty of occasions, but it's not impossible to build that bridge anyways.

FAE: Scribes are a Passive Class, but whether primary or not, sitting on a Lord impulse at all can let them go toe to toe with a Maid's forward energy and personal faith. While this can create similar casual conversations and jabs, Scribes are a Passive Class, and that comes with caveats. Being able to reach people intellectually or emotionally is still a fixation, where even if they can't find reason or results to do so, idling in their own indifference can be enough. Charging forward to do things themselves is a valid alternative/compliment, yes, but even if a Scribe isn't languishing in the slightest, there's still no pull to overwork themselves for the sheer sport of it, and even a certain pride in regards to delegation. Maids are inseparable from their gleeful, masochistic overheat, and while they can be stressed out from trying to meet others demands (real or imagined), it doesn't stop them trying to take over other people's duties in their own frenzy of labour - or give up, just as randomly, attracted to something newere and shinier. They knew who they were (kinda) since the moment their characteristics were visible, and being able to temper that motive with Bard corrosion is *their* long journey to untangle.

Alot of these comparisons are more theory than anything, since I'm still quite certain on certain clases being AMAB or AFAB locked, and exceptions at this point would be so rare as to only prove a rule. Still...such varying depictions of what a "strong woman" is supposed to look like. How poisonous our culture is, to limit all the options. It's not like Pages, Bards, Mages or AMAB Seers fit "correct" depictions of masculinity.

Sylphs can come close depending on the Scribe, but even without drifting to one of the previously described masks/states, they still won't match. The confusions arise from comparable high-energy tension and inevitable snaps, where helping everyone turns sour if there's too much pushback. However, much like with Knights, a Sylph's energy does tend to lead to more dedicated chores and favours - and, rather unique to them, *continuing* that work even when personal difficulties arise. Sylphs may have bite (probably too much), but it takes much longer for them to actually forfeit a job, and even longer to break a friendship; being passive-aggressive is enough,

where those gestures from a Scribe reflect an imminent confrontation or abandonment. Sylphs don't give up on people or their Aspect - even if they should, at least contextually, rather than at their absolute limits. Again, this isn't always something to envy.

ROYALS: At first glance, confusing (certain) Scribes with Princes makes a lot of sense; cynical, dry, authoritative, easily resigned, trying to win arguments with "look how much I don't care". The thing is, like their closer relation to Bards, Scribes have a destructive impulse that doesn't put themselves in their own sightlines (usually), and the extra tier of intensity means Scribes can actually outperform Princes in "I don't believe in fairies" grumpy misery. *Unlike* Bards however, the increased difficulty in sustaining the "maybe I have a point maybe I don't" affect makes them dangerously consistent in the brutal revolutionary underside, all while being a notch more brutal. To this end, Scribes can be very ruthless leaders to groups and projects - and given a difficulty/disinterest in diplomacy, they're probably damn talented to keep those kinds of positions. Dersites keep the edge, but Prospits who take this road more readily embrace contextual whimsy without worrying about a consistent reputation. Of course, it's easy to get the impression that disapproving of others and shitting on their ideas is a higher priority than results - and it probably is. Like with Princes, hostility is often meant to defend the self and one's most fragile dreams - but, unique to Scribes (and closer to Bards (obviously)), that self is not so vulnerable, or even so displayed. Heart-to-heart confessions or tender devotion can seem almost random, stumbled into, evoked by circumstance in the everpresent attribute of Scribe distractibility. If they've gone this far, they probably didn't think that was a side of them anymore - but Princes *always* know they're squishy on the inside, as we've gone over time and time again.

See, if you're going to put the Black Queen/Snowman somewhere, this would be about right. Really, calling them Queens AT ALL, this is about right - but that's cherry picking.

Grace of Wolfenstein: The New Colossus is...not popular, among most fans. Still, with hesitant trust placed in one of the essays I watched, she might be a good example of practical application with Scribe abrasion. That heckling, dismissive abuse can be weaponized strategically to push people, to weed out the fakes and the posturing, to steel them in their convictions by being their perfect opposition. Part of it feels like some perfect synthesis of Bard rambling or ranting, purer than anything they do themselves. Of course, how much is the measurement between leveraging Lord ego and just feeding it? Would anyone listen to her if she *wasn't* "Team Leader"? The Tinkerer in the Miles Morales game is a Scribe in much the same position, but the story does not make it ambiguous that her stubborn pride is screwing everyone over.

Confidence, self respect, pride...words for the same substance, in different states of damage, given and taken. Trust power and hierarchy to make it all so much more volatile.

Like with Priests and Princes, Bards provide the most interesting comparisons of similar instincts with only a few tweaks. It is in embracing the wildcard reputation of mirthful ambiguity that Bards find a stable place to judge others and work on their own projects. True, they do have their nuclear moments where they feel spurned to take matters *very* seriously, but these are few and far between. Scribes can perform the same absolute

confrontations and claims multiple times a day, which is probably why it's rather uncommon to see an actual Faux-Bard (in regards to the lackadasical grin) at work. Prospit Scribes seem to enjoy screwing people over for a cheap laugh or playing themselves off from time to time, but it's Dersites who (can, if they define themselves as such) go furthest in mimicking the routine and reputation; zany and irreverent, constantly rambling with their ideas and doubts, trying to talk over their own insecurities, hoping the effort endears without really feeling "in control" of their instincts. If you have to tell the difference, remember how Bards meander and debate around their ideas, where even the nuclear switch is usually struggling to make people "get it"; Scribes know that if they get riled up enough (which is much easier to happen), there's rarely room to talk, and that can make their humor even more of a desperate effort to avoid that.

Gremlins. Chipper, overly excitable gremlins. Such a contrast to the more "girlboss" aesthetic of other Scribes, but that's the spectrum. I'm tempted to call Lords "orcs", but that probably reflects poorly on me first and foremost.

MASTERS: We've already discussed many times how the dynamic with the Lord side defines Scribes, and how that self-assurance always boosts their stubborn arguments for any Class they mimic. While we'll discuss more later, we are discussing here how Scribes actually resemble Lords...which is usually not at their best. Sure, there's a similar habit of conjuring suspiciously convenient anecdotes from whole cloth to boost one's ego and political affiliations ("and everybody clapped"/"I was called racist by some jerk on the street"), but that's intermittent - a method, not a mask. Faux-Thief Scribes show self-interest with a nominal moderation to the world outside and those responsibilities - pushing past even that is something *really* ugly. Inverted Aspects often have more callousness and contempt associated with them, and take awhile to recontextualize and redeem; Scribes who go full Lord usually aren't doing so out of goodwill, and that makes them capable of some terrifying white-hot fury. "Authority" isn't the right word, it's just "brutality"; a scale that starts at insults and ends with throwing chairs at someone in a public space, screaming bloody murder. Lords are capable of a lot of the same ugly, but even they veer to an attempt at justifications (again, at least enough to convince themselves) - it's only Scribes who can throw that entirely to the wind. Of course there's healthier Lords and Scribes out there, but we're not talking synthesis yet; only what happens when you bet all your chips on the little voice that says "I'm right, I'm a winner, I deserve everything" while the other does nothing but fuel that flagrant egomania.

Whatever images might be conjured to your head, of personal experience or vivid second-hand account, please trust me when I say that it doesn't account for *all* Scribes. Even then, surely that does a *dent* to the macho bullshit Lords cultivate? It's the same temper, same entitlement...ugh.

Confusing Scribes and Muses is highly contextual, but not impossible. Both Dersite variants have their giggling fun, and Prospits can style themselves

as a gentle and graceful caretaker better than any other Class. In both cases, this reflects a more confident Muse reeling back needless penitence, and a more rounded Scribe reeling back retaliations, which is likely a good sign for either Class. Still, they remain at polar opposites of zealous prose and snappy practicality, which makes Dersites far less likely to create long term confusions; *any* Muse is liable to have long entrenched beliefs and interests, where Derse Scribes are prone to get all “OOO SHINY” . Now for the Prospits, in either a soothing voice without doubt, or a suffocating prescence that demands *you* have no doubt, it can get a little screwier. They are mutually powerful personas, carrying themselves as though nothing phases them, encouraging those close to not be phased either - though, sometimes the line is *how much?* Muses have a very broad obligation to the world, where even at their most grandiose, they’re still quite patient (or at least *verbose*) explaining themselves to even strangers. The most smooth stoic of a Prospit Scribe can count the people they’d stick their neck out for on two hands, and being *politely* dismissive is still dismissive. If you’re ever to find someone of this temperament and still need an answer, it’s best to pay close attention going forward; that under pressure, or just waking up on the wrong side of bed in the morning, they’ll display more *firm* Museisms or Scribeisms - or, Priestisms and Lordisms. No matter what, don’t confuse these harsh contrasts of black and white for good and evil.

Honestly, I’d count Jessica Rabbit as a Scribe. Morticia Addams is fuzzier, but I wanna’ say Muse. Maybe. Depends on the adaptation, perhaps.

You know I previously included Homestuck’s brief aside that Lords and Muses are “the most Active of Actives” and “most Passive of Passives” respectively. I wonder if that’s meant to say that Priests are the Passive-est Active Class, and Scribes are Active-est (activist?) Passive Class. Arguably, sure, I get the perspective - but that plays favourites in regards to Attunement over Adaptation, doesn’t it? Even if it’s not as *verbose*, Priests have a truly titanic idea of who they are, just as Scribes do *want* to radiate that same Muse-level influence. I’ve been very critical on the whiplash of Scribe devotion, but it does kinda “tie” with Muses too, which has its own harsh snaps and conditions all the same. All four of them are the highest intensity at what they do, where every strength is another’s weakness, and vice versa, infinitely variable depending on personal maturation and immediate circumstance.

Even besides that, just because someone’s sense of self is either hyper satisfied or hyper salty, I’m not sure that makes it “more”, you know? Just, louder. Loud is easy.

HERALDS: Now that we’ve established what Priests are, it’s worth actually comparing them to Scribes side by side. As Paired Classes, they share a similar approach; pinnacles of adaptation both, their primary Aspect can be attached or interpreted in a manner so scattershot it almost (but *just never quite*) loses its identity entirely. Their projects, no matter how blunt or creative they are intended to be, have rough stitching between the juxtaposed sources they take as inspiration. This pragmatism is paradoxically deified of course, where its easy to conflate their personal needs with cosmic order, just like the Master Classes they invert with. Callousness still permeates their worldview, making them quick to write off strangers and uncomfortably sincere in how they’d like to punish those that have wronged them - “Don’t care, didn’t ask”, a comforting salted earth

they may be too quick to live with. There's a beauty in their individuality that no one can match, but if they keep measuring themselves to others, they'll never see it - just spite, vapidness, and sneers. If you need to tell the difference, remember that no matter how much you annoy a Priest, their passive-aggressive jabs still have a Muse's patience before anything truly explosive. Scribes are prickly, and they'll either confront or withdraw much, much faster.

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INVERSION (PAYOFF): I really saved the toughest one for last...

LORDS AND SCRIBES are not evil people, but they are certainly volatile, and it's rarely that difficult to see. While much of the "Priests and Muses" relationship can be comparable - the schism of grandiose autocrat and harmonious unifier, both futile and at odds with an individual's actual wants - , the paint is all scraped off. The Master voice is the most reliable, the heavy-lifter in times of doubt; all the nuance (even mystique) of our last comparison falls flat to two individuals who most readily trust themselves, quote themselves, and weigh personal experiences over everything else. This is not always a bad thing, but it is the ability to *always* deem this "good" that makes every rough edge and stumble Lords and Scribes get into so much more obvious to the people around them. If it isn't, then you're probably so close in their orbit, so trusting of their words and friendship, that you'll be blindsided when reality comes crashing against all their assurances - that there is no golden ticket born from Lordly "intuition", or parity in a Scribe's declarations of "absolute justice". The fact of the matter is, a great deal of Lords and Scribes are cruel, petty, boastful, obsessed with popularity, willfully ignorant, and unapproachable in being anything more than this...and yet, despite *all* of that, they both on some level clearly *want* to. The Lord impulse's self image of "I'm top dog, you're jealous, fuck off", the Scribe impulse's "I made an attempt, you're just mean, fuck off", all covering slack for the side of themselves they do not nourish, do not heal, and do not *wield*. It's unlikely this text will reach them, let alone in any way they'll agree to...but if you did make it this far, it can't hurt to take a chance.

A personal Aspect **commanded**, and the passive Aspect **conquered**; it is easy to forget that both are equal intensity, capable of balancing each other, even in calmer cases. Maids and Bards are such a sharp disparity of "aggressively doing everything" and "aggressively doing nothing" that their connection is still difficult to process, highlighting the dangers of going down one road entirely. Pages and Rogues seem the only ones lucid, but trying to find a balance still takes a lifetime when it's easier to retreat to the sidelines. Mages and Heirs are both the most reliable at what they do, but neither seems to immediately recognize why: balance. Intensity is a fickle

bitch, and a Mage's unflinching force of will can match (and, contextually, *then some*) a Lord's bravado - after all, they sure as shit don't need to prove it, they already **know**. Just as well, Heirs have the talented influence they do by virtue of not actually *wanting* to **change** that much in the first place. Lords have such a bloated sense of self-importance that trying to build a narrative of why the world either does or should revolve around oneself is a doomed effort, while a Scribe's narrow patience hamstringing their efforts to be the beacon they *legitimately want to be*. Somewhere, past all the manipulations, there's a genuine spark to Lords when they try to take people under their wing and give them the world. Somewhere, past the blowups and rudeness, Scribes are sitting on the definitive answer to who they are and where they belong in the world, just like they always wanted. Like with Priests and Muses, it's not about changing the world - it's just about knowing yourself, and giving to others as much as you're willing to give.

I mentioned Chie of Persona 4 back there, but, in all honesty, I'm holding myself back by not quoting Persona for every class here. So vivid! So accurate! And Shadow Chie is so *palpable* as an inverted-Lord, and that friction within.

Really, so much of these Scribe schisms stem from all those blank silences and topic changes to fill the gap where the Lord voice would speak up. It's not evil. It's wild, it's rude, and I'm on record for every terrible suggestion it might make - but it exists for a reason. Every Inversion does. Bizarrely, while I have more Scribes close to me than Lords, I still know a smattering who really do seem to have both sides figured out. Not often, but so long as it ain't never, there's a glint of hope through these confining boxes.

Look, this document has described a mean of Lords and Scribes - which still isn't pretty. Lords so obnoxious in what they have, Scribes so disdainful of what they don't, and both so self-assured they don't crack enough to see the picture for what it is, let alone all the snags in what they want it to be. A lot of these people aren't going to see this, or only see what they want to see, and there's nothing that can change their minds in this lifetime and on this budget. The brass tacks remain that Lords who *do* mature, who *do* take a long look in the mirror, have learned how to embrace a side of themselves that is truly selfless. A side that is practical, content to reach only a few, and relieves the burden of trying to be everything they never chose to want; to prune the posturing douchebaggery, until the soul-of-a-poet they kept imagining themselves is finally within reach. For Scribes, all of this is on the table, like with any Inversion. Lords can learn to cherish that trust and approval from others, but Scribes seeking it exclusively are leaving their inner strength untapped. The hatred, the attention-seeking, the delusional defiance of basic facts, all (as I define it) a misfire - it's peace of mind, unyielding and unshaken, right there if they want it. The more we accept and find contentment with, the easier it is to work through our differences with people, process misfortune, admit fault, and be sincere. It's not about being everything to everyone, or angrily lashing out at those who don't take what you're selling, it's just...well, whatever you want it to be. The world

does not have to represent us or reflect us; we are our own worlds, and these two demonstrate that best before they even know it.

I can point to Johnny Silverhand's particular ending in Cyberpunk 2077, even with its cliches (which are probably part of the deal). Maybe it helps to see the arc of Steve Harrington (even if he had to get out-Lord'd by Billy to really get there). Robin is a Scribe, and I gotta say, it was a mix of emotions (mostly validation) to hear her friggin' say to Steve that they're "two halves of a better person". I do like them both. I wish I had more of either Class I got along with.

I did have a Lord in my life for quite a while; quiet now, he seems to have moved on, but we didn't part on poor terms. I'm grateful he spoke to me about what went on in his life, and even gave me a chance with all this. Honestly, with Lords, it really means something for them to have your back. Course I know that. I always did. Bar's high cause I know they work better when they believe what they're saying - so I can believe it too. Like every Aspect, like every part of life, believing it makes it, if nothing else, true enough to matter. Something to hold to. I hope this means something too. I hope, if you are a Lord or Scribe, you can hold to it too.

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[later]

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CONCLUSION(S)

(MAYBE THE REAL KING AND QUEEN CLASS WERE THE FRIENDS WE MADE ALONG THE WAY)

Well, you did it - or you skipped to the end. That's everything, all of them, and so many of the iterations and variants that they will display. The wild wonders of the human imagination, of fiery ideals, and of the multicoloured facets of personality we are and will meet in our lives...all boiled down to a couple of one-syllable designations.

Cheer up. It ain't so bad.

The sun still rises in the morning. Birds still chirp. If we still commit to destroying the climate, then at least we still get a few years to savor this silly little world. Maybe front row seats to watching a real apocalypse in our lifetime...and, maybe not, if enough people really do fight that good fight.

Tangents aside, the point is that people are still people; you are still you, and everyone you know hasn't gone anywhere. What is written here is (hopefully) accurate to life, but that alone need not cheapen the richness in that life. You can know how the sausage gets made and keep your appetite too - if you're not a coward.

People grow, people change. Classpects are inflicted, and while Inversion starts as our own dirty secrets and guilt, it has all the potential to round out our perspective in every way we need to hear. Again: people grow, people change, and the least you can do is shake things up instead of building intricate justifications on why the morals you arrived at during age 10 are your cross to bear for the rest of your life. Oh yes, this document insists you'll never shake the splinters, but insisting further that this is observation

and not what I wanted to see is besides the point: as loudly as I can, as clearly as I can, Classpects are not all we are. That they follow us into our futures is not a curse that they will control it.

It is equally important to accept accountability, and distance the material from the immaterial, the objective from subjective. Classpects may be a tangible "thing", but every moniker to differentiate them, the culture surrounding them, every explicit or implicit hierarchy, every assertion of danger or praise - *all of it* is a malleable secondary. This system is not best understood, or even "belongs", to Andrew Hussie, me, or any of the experts who impacted the former; no more than planting a flag on a mountain really makes it "yours", or discovering and naming an eye fold gives you ownership over everyone else's. These conceptions are ours, as personal as it gets, and it is honest to the facts to encourage you all to not be beholden to one definition on how they should or shouldn't be. What they *are*, sure, this document will wager itself as the best it can be at differentiating such things - but for *purpose*, for *direction*, that is best decided by you, your friends, and a trained therapist. This document has made its points, poetry, and praise, but this was (at its best) to encourage you on the journey; not to any one specific destination, but just warning of the pitfalls along the way. However, that is the end of everything I am willing to stand by under any veneer of professionalism.

It's hard to know what to say, really. The farther you pry into mechanics of values and beliefs, the harder it is to make any kind of true sweeping conclusion - or even justify the need for one. Neutral information is what it is, without a point until we give it one, and I'm certainly programmed to see a beauty in that. What's important on my end is...well, the noble thing, I would think, is what I stand by: everything this means to you, everything you'll make of it. But I am still plagued by pride; by this nasty little taste of sadism that takes a certain pleasure in ironing out the hard limits of what someone can do. The truth, so I hope, nothing but and nothing less - yet, too much fascination to every way it hurts us, too much zeal in what catches fire in sunlight. It's not all I am, but it is a piece. I never could kill it, and this is, surprisingly, one of the better manifestations of that spite. I can't rightly apologize for being what I am, but I do offer my condolences for the ways that has undermined my work. Someone more qualified should be doing this, but...well, real psychologists didn't take this path, and other Classpectors didn't either. For all my self-deprecation and admissions, I still don't have it in me to leave well enough alone.

I'm still trying to help. I like to think Hussie was too, with the mythological names and posturing that Homestuck played with. That when you peer back into the mechanical viscera of our compulsions, and take away all the romance we gave them, you can build it back with better romance. We may be stuck to some annoying defaults, but we can still aim that in a way that makes us individuals. We probably have, in ways we don't give ourselves credit for. I'm a sucker to my own delusions, but part of me really believes that we'll all find the answers we need to hear, given enough time - though I do wish more people accepted them.

I'm not a therapist. I'm an autistic Canadian kid who barely finished high school. I believe what I wrote. I checked with the professionals out there, and I'm not schizophrenic, despite the concern of friends and the derision of detractors. I'm very grateful for everyone who listened to me, who came around, who have shared their stories and helped me compile better information. I've made mistakes; costly ones I

wish I could take back. I'm sure I'll make more. But I'm only one perspective anyways. Whether you write anything like this or not, I hope you all make your own conclusions. For what it's worth, I deeply hope what I HAVE written helps with things you're going through, or will go through. Maybe it just amuses you, and I'll take that. I'm at least happy doing this stuff for me, regardless of what people think. It took a long, long time to say that, and longer still to mean it.

The heavy stuff is out of the way. Just got a few loose ends, of questionable substance. You can stop here if you want, no worries. But I've been told one of my better qualities is being 'thorough'.

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LIFE OF THE AUTHOR

(COMPETITIVE ARMCHAIR PSYCHOLOGY)

In the face of everything, all of it, Homestuck remains a comic about ships, theories, memes, and gray skin paint. Classpecting is a pastime, but, also a niche. Taking it under more serious study is a further niche, and taking it as *true* is about as far as it goes. Any claim I make is innately damaged from pointing back at *fucking Homestuck*, a webcomic that no one hates more than its oldest fans. So, my pitch on a big revelation in modern psychology using it as a centerpiece is...shaky at best. Even if you think I'm on to something, how much is anyone's faith that Andrew Hussie also was? Even if you'll go so far as to ignore the guy's claims that they weren't, there's been enough public blunders that some people's dealbreaker will just be presuming the guy is even *capable* of such a feat.

I haven't had the chance to read all the director commentary in the Homestuck print books, but I haven't heard it circulated what Hussie's process was - in fact, their early life is pretty quiet online. I've made it very clear I already presume Hussie to be a Derse Priest, though "Waste of Space" was never denied; even partially played into, given Psycholonials. They did, however, say that they spoke(texted?) similarly to Dave, and transitioned to Dirk's text later. Dave was always "the most natural" to them. But here's another thing: they *had* to have been analogous to Rose at the same time. I know this because I have.

Do I even have to describe a Seer of Light, or have we all been paying attention? To study and steady, in unbiased observation, the narratives and (presumed) destinies of others; their stories and conclusions, good and bad, and without being held to the same grip of those narratives. Important, sure; more important, Rose is characterized early on as someone who obsessively psychoanalyzes her friends, playing therapist and studying their behavior - a trait mostly downplayed as things go on, which rarely "fires" like a Checkov's ought to.

Without ever meaning to, I found myself doing the same in an effort to find the truth in this mess of medieval cosplay; prodding others with questions, careful not to push too far or give too much away, playing it off with a Derse touch of self deprecation when things got awkward. Course, I'm still a Page, and a nervous wreck doing all of that...but, entertaining the notion Andrew Hussie really did try to pioneer some personality system, found some similar patterns amidst their pals, ain't that the way to do it? Would the guy not have the reputation of mysterious psychoanalyzing, much to the chagrin of friends? Hell, it's behavior I've heard catch on, from the people who have reached out to me with their own enthusiasm; cracking heads open and studying all those intricate repeating patterns of conviction and compulsion.

It goes further than that. To consider oneself a Knight isn't a terrible assessment, with encouragements amidst one's own indifference - deflections, even if for different purposes as I've tried to iron out in discrepancies. Hell, wouldn't even be that far to regard one hypothetical Priest of Time's own Aspect as something to sacrifice; too selfish to actualize (openly, consciously). Not necessarily the same way as a Knight would...but close. I said earlier I believed Lord English to be an analogy of the worst characteristics; *if so*, is an Heir of Breath not alarmingly similar to an Heir of Void? Breath and Void move in similar ways, though forgiving and forgetting a problem have different applications and a stark contrast of nobility; moreso, the gaslighting of a truly dangerous Priest had a darker, more cautious edge...but Equius is the Derse one of the two, wasn't he? John was more honest. Maybe Andrew hoped they were, at least once.

And if all 3 of these states are viable, and it's obvious you aren't running any of the same "scripts" as your friends, then a Witch of Space's personal malleability of creative expression is RIGHT on the money, ain't it?

Now like I said, I can relate to Rose, and that is from the circumstances. There's reason to guess, maybe, hypothetically, the beta kids are a conglomerate of Hussie's childhood ennui - but the Alpha kids? REALLY look at the Classpect system, see the potential to "resolve" people of avoidable internal strife, and you wind up in a pretty similar place. **Finding an optimal path of self improvement through belief.** Everyone around you depressed? **Fight the world until it resembles the stabil you want**, even if you can barely contain it under the guise of negotiation. They get caught up with the rest of their lives, who they think they are and how the world works? **Tell them to forget. Tell them to let go.** Not an Heir's touch...something more to risk, something more heartfelt and vulnerable, even if it's more honest that the problem hasn't gone away - you're just saying **it doesn't matter, and it doesn't have to a part of your story.** They get huffy? Jesus, why? You just offered them hope, life, and eased the journey there. Yeah, maybe they've got **stubborn gut feelings about who they are**...but isn't that enough to make one irritated, even if you try to pretend you're just nobly sacrificing for them? Really, they're gonna get passionate and say being misreadable is just "who they are"? You know better. You know them better than they know themselves, and you've got the paperwork to prove it, the ungrateful idiots. Rip that band aid off - **destroy it.**

It's the perfect recipe for transforming your friend group into an unstoppable gnostic-themed unit of self-actualization and purpose - until you actually cook the recipe. It turns out, if you try to condense all these ideas of perfection and spiritual decadence into a concentrated meat-and-candy package, then force feed that to someone, the results might scare you.

Maybe real people work differently than that.

I've had to learn that. And now I find myself wondering, precariously, if Hussie went through these exact same paces. I followed their notes, tried to draw a better map, and may have very well wound up walking their exact footsteps...but did they turn around here?

The Cherubs are, beyond a shadow of a doubt in my mind, Hussie herself. A religious homage, analogies for the split fanbase, a villain ex machina, maybe that too - but I'll put money on it being Andrew first and foremost. Priests are the direct Inverse of a genuine Muse, comparable to Lords except in all their phillistine nature...but, to paint that picture, a Lord of Time wouldn't be a bad starting point, would it? And does that not raise a hundred fiery questions on Calmasis, the enigmatic pseudo-union of the two, drawn almost identical to Hussie's own comic insert? Almost irrelevant to the main comic beyond Hussie's comic self dressing as them?

Of course, while Priests do emulate Lords if they do nothing but ramp themselves up, it's imperfect to the real thing - they are dispassionate, dishonest (like, moreso), and disguised. I already covered that. Maybe now it makes more sense: 8 human faces,

all with struggles and doubts, all roles used in a twisted theatre show - both webcomic, and perhaps a real human life. Behind it all, a chimeric demon of 4 evils: a ruthless monster, a soulless robot, a manipulative pervert, and an insane clown who thinks he's a King.

But what to make of it then? Caliborn takes over a body of two, but the other side still wins in the end? The kids...still, make it, and make their own world, are the dreambubbles still analogous to fanworks? Homestuck is just Hussie(x4) vs Hussie + Hussie(x4) + Hussie(x4)? Admittidly, I think it would explain why the big cheese wanted the community to name the characters by themselves. But what about all the characters dating and dreaming and falling apart? What is the natural progression of these impulses made into self-sustaining characters with arcs in the purpose of entertaining fiction, and what is autobiographical confessions?

I have no answers to where the lines are, I'm afraid. I can say with relative certainty (and all the asterisks that comes with) that Hussie's self-insert antics are the tip of a truly imposing iceberg of mindful self indulgence...but I cannot even *guess* their full intention. At the same time, we're not idiots here; we can establish a few things. That they finished this. That past the jokes, it meant something to them. That, real psychology or not, however much they believed in it, there remains some motive to talk about a Coming-of-Age, and what does or doesn't leave you better off. That might require some faith, but I truly don't see how he could've written *that story* with the Alpha Kids, and not been in the position I (and perhaps someday, you) are in. The direct approach has limits - the Muse won. Hussie gave everyone the toolset, but skipped half the labels and burned the instructions...now I have the audacity to think that cowardice, and publicly admit it's wisdom I only *hope* is misplaced.

They weren't a licensed professional, sure, but that only explains the format - not the point. Maybe they thought spelling it out was unsustainable, and danced around it to pique curiosity without lecturing? Maybe they just wanted to tell their story, broken dreams and all? As an old friend of mine used to say, "a little of column A, a little of column B."

So here's a thought: how much SHOULD we care what Hussie says?

<https://blog.giovanh.com/blog/2020/10/03/the-hiveswap-fiasco/>
<https://blog.giovanh.com/blog/2021/01/14/hussie-exploited-the-odd-gentlemen-backers/>
<https://archive.vn/CgeSz>
...and of course, the Sarah Z debacle.

What affection I have for Homestuck these days comes from how long it's been since I've been reminded of Hussie's words, let alone hearing them again explicitly. I can gloss over the bad takes and problematic elements (even if I shouldn't), but it's this skeevey sensation towards the author's prescence that pushes me the most. Sort of silly from a certain persepective, but it really is the sum of our inevitable parasocial relationships in this modern world to feel an attachment to these figures without knowing them. Still, even your real friends can dissapoint, so maybe we're all shit as a species. I accept the folly. Accept my brain is malleable and fallible. It's just dissapointing to watch someone veer into duplicitous autocracy, after writing a story about knowing better. Is this a relapse, or was their takeaway more a compromise than I hoped? All I know is, the more I dig in to quotes and such, the more I recognize. I hope, maybe, you will too - from people you know, people I've spoken of, and maybe people you are.

At the end of the day, despite *everything*, Homestuck is a pretty great webcomic. Hussie, despite the kind of fickle attention span that's doomed so many of that archetype trying to write a grand epic, made something (with more help than they'll admit) worth the investment, while finding fame and fortune. Maybe that changed them.

Maybe they never changed. Regardless of intent, people have and always will take what they like about Homestuck, as a smorgasbord of ideas and concepts that invites collaboration and wonderment; a tribute to the endless potential of the human soul.

I wrote that if Hussie came out of their hole with answers, that, irregardless of whether you believe it or not, it simply wouldn't *matter*. Now that that day has come, I stand by that. Hussie talks alot about the comic being out of their hands, but I can promise you all, it is even more than they know.

Andrew Hussie is a genius - and *alot* of other things you can criticize the guy for, not least of which the embarrassing retaliations against those criticisms. While I don't regret harsher words I've said in earlier forms of this document, I've been reconsidering what words I'll stand by here, if only for my own sense of decorum. True, there is a non-zero chance Andrew himself might read this...but, I still figure it does me good to not worry so much about whatever they get up to. It makes it alot easier to enjoy Homestuck that way, no matter what form it takes. Hell, I've probably been too rude already to ever catch an audience with the guy; even if we do share an aspect, we clearly don't share a love-language.

Still, without condoning any of these antics or controversies, I can still confidently offer a sincere thank you for the work Andrew Hussie did, and the positive impact it had on my life and others. Hopefully, to those reading this, and certainly those in a similar position of dissatisfaction with the fandom, one can find solace in salvaging and surviving. It's not perfect; nothing ever is, because nothing can be perfect to everyone. So take what you can from Homestuck in the weaving of your own story, trash the rest, and don't be surprised that someone else focused on something else - even if they're still *wrong* about Classpects.

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GENDER **(SETTING THE RECORD GAY)**

Even after the clarifying statement I made in the opening pages of this document, and the many remarks I've made along the way, I cannot escape the accusations that this document reflects a bigoted worldview - whether accidentally, subconsciously, or in outright duplicitous intent. No matter how I phrase it, what I stress, who I talk to in person, I cannot escape these accusations entirely. Frankly, I probably never will.

It does hurt. Sucks even talking about this. I've found alot of peace and belonging with the queer community. I regret all those years I spent stuffing things down, trying to tough through my dysphoria. But, when hateful bigots tell me what I can and can't be, that hurts too - so, I do get it. I understand how this hurts; I understand that I have hurt people with this, in a crime that exists regardless of any intention I could have, and to say nothing of the cruder words I've used carelessly in versions past. I am sorry for that. Be it strangers I've never met, or those who took enough issue enough to burn a bridge, I am truly sorry.

I suppose some of the heart of that is held back by the fact that I do have all these other reasons to keep going; that the most mercy I can show anyone is trying to rip off the band-aid. To handle the subject with a little kindness and alot of encouragement. If this is the world we've got, then I still feel there's a good in trying to ease the pain of living in it. If I'm wrong, trans people are valid - if I'm right, they still are. While I'm sympathetic to the passion people have seeing more biological inconveniences as an attack on trans rights, I'm concerned how many see it as a lethal one. I don't know precisely how all this AGAB Class business fits in with that factoid of "transwomen have women brains from birth" and so on, but...if that was

debunked, would the whole movement evaporate for you? Would you lose your reason to keep fighting? Lose the hope you could win?

I maintain I do not have the resources to claim a Class is AMAB or AFAB conclusively, but these are still my observations without counter-evidence as of writing: to AMABs are Mages, Heirs, Pages, Knights, Princes, Bards, Priests, Lords. To AFABs, Witches, Rogues, Maids, Sylphs, Muses, Scribes. And while the only two Classes I know for damn sure can be born either way are Seers and Thieves, that doesn't change that *every* Class is gender neutral in my book. If this is how it is, how the facts of our genome play out, then none of it undoes our right to expression, and the falsehoods of cishet normativity; that we don't need any stronger argument than the essential truth that **sex isn't gender.**

But hey - the claim remains that there's personality types built on chromosomes. It's a bad fucking look, saying that. Feels like half of the skeptics I've met on this, they draw the line there centrally; that it must reflect something broken or ignorant on my end, regardless of anything else I've ever said. For a lot of people, Homestuck's more explicitly gendered Classes - and by extension, the personalities amidst our histories and fictions - become synonymous with "gendered expectations of regressive society", which has created an entire school of thought antithetical to my approach and resulting compromises. How can I truly fault those who identify with the Witch title to validate their femininity, when there's a thousand years of "Witchy" personalities being portrayed ontologically feminine? Saying I've met Ladies who are just as loud and obnoxious as male Lords is too easily read as a dogwhistle that transwomen cannot escape a brutish masculinity inherent to Lords - as if anything brutish cannot be outside the realm of masculinity (and as if Lords can't be twinkles). A popular notion in Classpecting circles revolves around cosmic femininity and masculine violence, where Homestuck's Lord of Time and Muse of Space are meant to be binaries in extremely far reaching implications. I say Prince and Lord are confused only in toxic masculinity but not in base elements - but for some people, toxic masculinity *is* the base element between them.

I make my claims, I make my arguments, but there's no getting around how a lot of this stuff makes me want to throw up in my mouth. Sure, hearing people imply that I'm implying that an AGAB Class is innately gendered makes the lack of any AFAB Pages sting more than it should...but, hearing people write the Time Aspect itself as masculine? That rubs me wrong. Even within Homestuck itself, we have two lady Timebounds, and calling their femininity into question just for their appreciation of entropy and violence seems...fucked? This view that Classpects are inherently regressive is quite popular among most circles, whether formally drawing metaphors of Classpects as reductive societal expectations, or feeling that the greatest act of rebellion is simply picking a Class *based* on presumed coding, but in a trans affirming way. And hey, maybe I should learn to bite my tongue and let people have some honest fun - but isn't the coding itself kinda fucked? What men always will be, what women always will be...I guess it's easier to stomach if you consider Classpects just a fiction. To bend it into a metaphor about what stories are told about us, and the ones we choose in protest. But denegrating Classpects and gender roles as the same thing is a little victory, compared to a potential *big* one. Humour my take on Classpects, and you've got a case to ***annul*** our entire human history of gender roles altogether.

I said back in the Lord section that their Class creates a kind of feedback loop: societal expectations of what a man "should" be (according to Lords), parroted forwards in a game of telephone across generations. To expand on this, Lords exalt any part of their personal identity - career, hobbies, dreams, kinks, family lineage, hometown, local sports team, etc. Even if an exception to AMAB Lords exists, the vast swath of them maintains a vanguard line in propagating chavinisim - to the point I wonder how large their role has been in inventing the concept altogether. But that this consensus is unconscious doesn't mean that it's innate to some deep truth: Lords who do not conform to this model of masculinity, or the outright transwomen among them, may be drowned out by the zeitgeist but do not suddenly fail to exist. Even following notions of masculinity across different time periods and cultural landscapes

will meet you with many irreconcilably different interpretations of it. In short, while Lords may look like they take to masculinity like a fish to water, it's more like pigeons to cities.

Heirs can manage to take a silver-medal as exemplar to masculine traits, but their wildly differing characteristics to Lords highlights how utterly surface level that is. Oh yes, we can play with the cliches: the protector, the big brother, the incorruptible man with a plan. Could you attribute these qualities to Lords? Maybe - *should* you? We're talking about someone different. Lords can lead, can protect, but they do it all different, in ways I've dissected pertaining to their own axis of Lord and Scribe behaviors. Heirs aren't like that - they're not even an Active Class. Sure, their interplay with Mageisms can make them stubborn to their gut, but, innately, Heirs know who they are to others before they ever know themselves. Despite what one might ascribe to Heirs, in the stories or the history books, they are ""ontologically"" **not** individualists - and the side of them that gets close, Mages, sure as shit ain't the model of a family man.

Of course, you know who is an individualist? Princes! But has any picture I've painted of that Class struck you as a bearded survivalist wrestling bears? Hey, maybe you found one out there, good for you - but what about all the precocious little snooty hipsters? Buncha' *nerds* trying to prove they're above anything and everything sincere? As I've already mentioned, their biggest calls to action and declarations of authority are *Sylphisms*. Personally, I've made a habit of regarding Princes as "hysterical". I wouldn't say that to a Sylph, and tap into that bigoted history of regarding women (or ex-women) as so emotional and high strung...but, the behaviors invoked for such stereotypes are *right there* on Princes themselves, when they work themselves into a fit. You can apply these same arguments to Priests, by the by. All this isn't me pulling some uno-reverse and declaring these Classes feminine, to be clear; I'm saying the entire gender dichotomy is fucked hypocrisy, and we can prove it *mathematically*.

And of course, my own blood: Pages. The archetypical, classical "beta male". An honoured exception to masculine ideals, too often misguided into thinking they need to close the gap. But of course that's what they're told, explicitly or otherwise; a Page's fixation on a potential self is easily hijacked by toxic narratives to *explain* their own status as an exception. For too many Pages, the road to actualization takes on a "Revenge of the Nerds" corruption, objectifying women and subdoing their own empathy. It's not like it's much better in certain left-leaning circles, immediately seeing their traits as "egg-y". Real fucking mature way to handle someone displaying non-standard masculinity, gang. Jackasses. My want for estrogen never meant giving up my teeth, and there's plenty of toothless Pages out there with no dreams of wearing pretty dresses.

I bring up these pillars of the myth - wonky and off center as they are - to illustrate the illusion of it. The artifice. The compromises and missing connections that make masculinity only as real as we allow it to be, and not a damn thing more. Because if you are going to pretend that there's *any* nugget of a universal quality to all these classes, there's one blindspot that counters the argument firmly: **Bards**. Beautifully aimless, confused, unserious Bards. Under certain paths of life and choices we make, there is maybe a noble warrior among them here or there; there is, surely, a chauvanist, whose coasts along on bigoted privilege without the moxie to even live up to it. Bards are, as I've seen them, AMAB - but they are **not** patriachs. They are a square peg that cannot be fit to the round hole, and hopefully you can see now how there are no round pegs. There is no "male" class. None of them. A few octogons you can say "close enough to" and jam into a wall until you've forced a circle from the granite. It's never a right fit. It can't be. Tends to hurt the peg, too.

And women? Men of Wö? It's all the same bunk; a few would-be "deep truths" to the gender that fail to line up right, towards either estrogen (speaking from experience) or any of the classes specifically. I'm sympathetic (and critical, yes) to transwomen who latch on to the Witch label, but out of any idea that it *must* be feminine? Those particular quirks, that particular script? I've never met an AMAB Witch, but I met a

non-binary one - and for their sake, in my own loyalty to a friend if nothing else, why ascribe all their quirks to something dysphoric? Why bother treating Muses as "archetypal of great feminine intuition and forgiveness" when there's all those same personality traits hopped on T? Sylphs are more than motherhood, Maids have moxie inbetween Pages and Lords but are *only* discounted from the dick-measuring from so-far-as-I've-seen not being born with one - and hey, if they want in, I won't stop them! But the only reason they're not a first choice with such storied history is the *pure coincidence* of what classes landed where! Rogues wind up with so many stories of being alienated from "girly" expectations if only because - akin to Bards - they're generally unaccounted for in the usual stereotypes, and left to feel out of place regardless of how they identify.

Thieves and Seers avoid most of this baggage, exonerated by circumstances alone. They aren't *more* gender neutral - it's just the coincidences of where things are. Punks and librarians, all carried on unconscious knowledge that it could go either way. But I see any class like these two. Hey, maybe I missed an AFAB Knight somewhere, idfk, but I like to think it doesn't matter. Like to think it's all adaptable. We've got enough things in our lives we don't choose, but gender is all ours. Don't let anyone try to take your choice from you. If they try, fight them. Win.

Say you're a stubborn bigot. Say that you want to take my work and go, "Okay, there's 8 types of man and 6 types of woman, so we've got enough greek letters to rank them all." First of all, I hope someone kicks your fucking teeth in. Secondly, you're still screwed, cause of everything I said about Inversion. If you're still going to insist on classes being male or female, then my branch of classpecting is still quite loud about how your best actualized self is the sum of two sides - which, predominately, is split on gender. Taking the Brochure in a bioessentialist perspective, you are left with the take that nearly every person is a spiritual hermaphrodite, the only men are Heirs/Mages, and women aren't real. I hope it's plainly obvious that this is fucking stupid, and wholly incompatible with any version of reality.

This is the sum of it, really. No AFAB Class is feminine, no AMAB Class is masculine, and the biggest arguments the breadth of human history has for what "masculine" or "feminine" is is a bunch of Classes that are incompatible with the concept. We are who we choose to be, and of all the things we gotta learn to live with, gender isn't among them. I've believed this for a long time, and I hope this dissertation gets the point across; less so for my public reputation, and more anyone else who has their *own* fears of what this potential truth might say. Not to say you can't disagree, not to say you can't still think I'm full of shit...but if you humour the hypothetical that maybe this really is how human personalities work, I hope you understand it's still a world worth living in. That I am trying to fight for something better; that this document is, itself, trying to move some things forward. Do some good. Fool that I am.

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COMMENTS, CRITICISM, AND CORROBORATION (SATISFACTION GUARANTEED*)

Many times in this document, I have invoked the assurances that this is not a solo venture; that I showed my early work to those around me, and that what you read now is built out of what they shared back. Certainly, none of this would have been possible if I was eternally playing cagey psychoanalyst from the sidelines, and I truly cannot repay the debt to those who humoured my early wild guesses, helping me refine it into something functional.

Of course, at the same time - what if I really am just crazy? Not even something so dramatic as a manipulative puppetmaster, so much as, what if my words appeal only to

crackpots and any so vulnerable as to be bullied through *argumentum ad populum*? It doesn't make sense from where I'm standing - but you, reading this? I'd be insulted if it *didn't* cross your mind. I certainly still worry if I am only picking sympathetic narratives...

If you'll forgive some indulgent sentimentality, I think my faith in consensus is the result of being raised to not trust my own eyes or ears. Whether under the grasp of my father, or a loney and abusive older man who plagued my teens, or a questionable loyalty during my early twenties that I don't entirely regret, I have experienced a wide spectrum of self-proclaimed experts telling me what they wanted me to believe, and steering me away from anything but their words. My way of healing from such iconoclasts was to experience the world, and remind myself how fallible *anyone* is; that wisdom manifests slowly, among talkative company, and never if you can't admit a mistake.

I hope this document is a convincing argument to whoever reads this. I hope it's clear that, while my method has been to reach your own senses, and paint a picture of visceral immediacy, that I still want you to think critically. I don't want to shackle you to only my train of thought, in both parity and the concern it would diminish your own voice. I have spoken with confidence, but that zeal is an active effort, and I want you to decide for yourself what to make of me. As I see it, the least I can do is share some of the perspectives that made me.

Below is feedback I have collected from anyone I got to sit through even half of this nonsense, and even some of their own volition. It's not everyone, unfortunately; some people are behind burnt bridges, some on the other side of the country, and some are dead. I encourage constructive criticism, but I'll display anyone's two cents so long as it doesn't have a slur.

For whatever my word is worth, I promise you: I play with my cards face up.

Mellababyfishy Witch of Space (Derse)

Through experience you may know yourself better and in understanding what is around you lessen the natural hunger for fear. Do not be afraid to meet this writting eye to eye, take a deeper look into its world, your world. Run in the grassy feilds of this brochure, sit on its beaches and pitch questions to its clouds. Feel the subtle drops of words and text fall from its skies like a soft rain. Let it shape and reshape your world over and over again. Become someone new. All of this can happen, only if you let it.

Connor M 25 (1999) Heir of Breath (Prosprit)

Love ya bro.

I'm personally not sold on it. My background in scientific studies and formal education clashes with a lot of the statements and beliefs present in this work. However, like any other personality test, or feeling reference system

(astrology, etc), I commend those that positively benefit from the structures present in the brochure. It's important to have purpose and meaning in your life. If the classpect system helps you better verbalize, communicate, and understand yourself and others then what's wrong with that. As long as no one is getting hurt and you strive for excellence and self betterment I shall never deny someone's paradigm of understanding, even if I don't agree with it.

“EpimetheusEmrys”, T. J. C.

24 (Born 1999)

Priest of Heart (Prospit)

I believe that humans have behaviors and responses that are caused by traceable, identifiable sources. I believe these can be categorized and equated into a variety of similar categories of behavior. I see Dew's work as no different from those contributing to the studies of personality types, such as the Meyers-Briggs, or any form of behaviorist psychology. The Homestuck-derived nature of it, when it comes down to brass tacks, is no more than a convenient and thematic framework that provided a starting point and structure to Dewdrop's working theories. And I do believe in them. Aspects and classes to me are as real as psychological archetypes, the Jungian Hero's Journey, or any other attempt to chart the deeper recesses of our minds. That is what I honestly believe.

(2026-02-11)

“Nothing is better than eternal happiness, and a ham sandwich is better than nothing. Well, this brochure is as good as two ham sandwiches.” - Epimetheus “Two Quotes” Emrys

“Harry Hinderson”

Prince of Light (Derse)

So a bit earlier in my life I was struggling a lot with my identity. I was filled with a lot of spite and was obsessed with trying to “better” myself to make everyone like me. I just kind of wanted to be whatever I thought would make people like me, but obviously it never did work. I really had no idea who I “was” underneath all the bullcrap I spewed, or who I wanted to be. It just made my already crippling anxiety even worse. The philosophy of this brochure really did get me thinking and helped me a lot of ways. The concept

that we're all made of these core impulses and hypocrisies that are entirely inexorable that we just have to live with really did put me at ease in that department. That these contradictions which recursively and endlessly feed into each other are both natural and something we just gotta work around just clicked. I've mostly adopted the core philosophy at play into how I think of people.

Here are the two MOST IMPORTANT pieces of advice I can give to Princes: Always keep an open mind, and usually assume people are acting in good faith.

"Derseprinceoftbd on Tumblr", ZADJ
19 (Born 05/10/2005)
Prince(ss) of Light (Derse)

If it really were so largely based in wild conjecture, how could it devastate my self-esteem so accurately? 10/10.

"enegyDrink", Zypher
20 (Born 05/31/2004)
Scribe of Rage (Derse)

Even if some things aren't like universally agreeable the template itself, even if you scrubbed out all the homestuck, still works. Like all those different permanent personality categories when you think about it?? People still align with them and everyone's met at least 1 of multiple categories. Also the poetry is good and I'm eating it sometimes I still go back to read it because the poetry is. Muah. Chefs kiss

"CC"
18 (Born 2005)
Seer of Mind (Derse)

Much can be and has been said about the potential of this system for the characterization of personality archetypes in people, and my response to all that is that an attempt to categorize the breadth of human experience within a limited number of rigid boxes will, without exception, be flawed, though that does not mean that it is without value. No document will be more fruitful for your personal growth than simply reflecting on *your* life, but it's certainly a start. Certainly helped me find some good threads to pull on back in the day.

Though what I'd like to sing the most praises about is this brochure's utility in the process of media analysis. Homestuck is, after all, media, and its characters, while in many moments relatable, are still larger-than-life archetypes of the era it was written in. No other system has provided me with as good a way to predict and analyze fictional behaviour to date, heck, classpecting indirectly helped me get into university, which is, to be frank, *wild*. All in all, a decent read.

“horizon”

29 (Born July 1995)

Muse of Hope

this is easily the most comprehensive, dedicated, and useful document i've ever seen come out of a fandom. it singlehandedly did a whole lot of therapeutic lifting while reminding me that magic is really really real, and the writing itself is inspired while still showing a massive amount of diligence. from the details to the parallels and back again, this is the classpecting document that finally put my mind to rest after at least a decade of trolling the depths of the internet for information on the topic. it's only for those with the stomachs to look at themselves critically without falling into self-deception or self-flagellation, but if you can walk the line, you'll be rewarded by knowing yourself (or your favorite characters) in a thousand different lights. i like it.... alot.

“Fluff”

Muse of Void (Derse)

This is an extremely personal document. Honestly nice to see compared to other papers on personality types like Enneagram and MBTI (although maybe a smidge too personal in some parts). It's an interesting way of seeing yourself and other people around you, and that's ~*neat*~. Although it is a bit scathing in some parts, maybe it's something that someone needs to hear if they want to take this 179 page brochure seriously (I needed something to say other than document or paper). I, personally, get a *little* bit something out of the brochure, but maybe not as much as other people who read it, and that's okay. I don't really like sorting people into boxes, although I will admit these are very generous boxes with the mentioning of inversion and how many notches close or far away you are to other classpects on the *wheel*. It's fun to discuss with friends (Dewdrop being one of them), but I don't take everything extremely seriously. Letting people exist and do whatever the

fuck they want is more my speed. Still, it's a decently well put together take on personality types, even if it is so personal. To the reader, I don't think it should be taken as gospel. This isn't **the** way to classpect, end of discussion. This is what classpecting is to one individual and they wanted to share it. If you get something out of it, cool! Awesome! If you don't agree with some, or even all of it, that's cool too. Discuss it, have fun with it, do whatever. Just, for the love of Christ, be nice.

P.S Dewdrop is kewl, give them a cookie

P.P.S I can and will beat a Lord in a fight, watch me >:O

Tristan

23

Derse Mage of Life, last time I checked.

distant, self assured, quiet? perhaps. i find i talk far to much for my own liking and tend to trail off when i forget the reason i started talking. At one time i was very self assured and stubborn, tended to fuck me over in any relationship i had, but that led me to take a step back and work on being a bit more malleable in my thoughts and judgements, so i'd say that unchanging stance of self is a bit strong a word.

Distant is a good description. The reasons for why others of my class might be like that, i don't know nor will i hazard a guess. I get distant by the ideas that drift into my head, by the sudden solemn fantasies and worries that smash down when those i care about don't reply, but the hardest to admit is that i get distant because im paranoid im a problem to be around, i get quiet because I worry i'll break anything i touch with a word, I act self assured because if i didn't have an anchor of what my ideals are? i'd drift until i found im a monster in leage to something worse.

But this will not always be the case

“Dazhukan”

24 (Born October 1st, 2000)

Knight of Heart (Derse)

This is bullshit this is stuPId tHis is BULLShit. But not untrue. Fuck you and fuck your stupid horse sorry your horse is nice, but I hate it it's stupid. You should've totally understood the obvious angry times I made it so obvious when my intonation was the exact same as when I was joking and fine. I Hate being alone but never be close to Me because it's stupid and it's fire

and it'll hurt and it'll burn but don't because I can do this. I can do this Alone. Insane rambling of a madman but I'm the example. You there. Citizen. I am real. I am Real. I Am ReaL. This is not some dramatization these are the thoughts flowing out. Help me Help me Help Me Help Me. Don't you read into this or psychoanalyze anything I'm fine it was rough but it's fine because it's okay and thanks for watching

“Mouse”

20 (Born August 1st, 2004)

Scribe of Space (Derse)

I don't really know how to describe it (haha. did you. did you see what I did there) but with the amount of personality theory I've consumed over the years (MBTI, enneagram, OCEAN, socionics, the four fucking temperaments), this thing has come the closest to nailing me and almost everyone I know. It's nuts. I've ranted about it to literally anyone I trust enough to rant about it. I don't know what was put in this thing or HOW they came to these conclusions, but it is terrifyingly true to life. And it's based off of Homestuck. The world truly is a magical place.

I also find the writing style REALLY cool. Sure it's not the most academic, and it took me a second to fully get, but I've never read anything written quite like it and I feel like it conveys stuff in a way academic writing kinda can't. Haha amateur hour academic writers go to ur room

Anyway. Coming to terms with being a scribe has changed my life for the better and I like to think this thing helps me out sometimes with being a full human being so like. Yeah. One of my favourite books frfr.

“ataraxiaApotheosis”

They didn't seem too sure on a classpect. I might try to figure them out another day.

DewDrops brochure is an articulate piece of work that, with it's hundreds of possible outcomes, goes much deeper than other personality systems such as Myer Briggs. It is a document that invites you to challenge yourself, to really go introspective to start figuring out who you are. It takes the Classpect system and makes it WORK, undaunted by how messy such self-work can get. It calls you out, then soothes you, it opens up and invites you to do the same before leaving you with inspiring parting words. The read feels like you stumbled upon something genuine and mystical, yet also like talking to a friend. A must read for everyone who is interested in personality systems, regardless of their knowledge on Homestuck.

“Ricky Shalo”

18 (Born 2005)

Priest of Blood(??)(Prospit)

Even through the efforts of quite the array of classpecting aficionados, this one's never been too sure on Aspect. Priest, at least, for sure.

I think this system has a lot of utility and I personally do like personality archetypes. I think if humans were really unbounded to any base personality then it would probably mean that most ideologies, friendships, and rivalries would be a choice and would probably be flippant. Such a world would probably suck and would be an unstable nonsense existence. A lot of people seem to hate the idea of being categorized or pinned down in any sense but at the same time they don't usually seem to understand what a fully unpinned world would entail or be and the irony is that they usually fit in stereotypes more than those who don't resist the idea of being pinned down in anyway. I do think that there's probably somewhat infinite possibilities of how an archetype could represent itself and that fitting into an archetype isn't necessarily a good or bad thing. I personally like looking at how archetypes interact with each other and personally like being pinned down since I tend to be an anti-stereotype without really trying to be and I think that people probably shouldn't be as insulted by the idea of being characterized at all because that doesn't mean that you're aren't special and even the ones that seem negative can help you manage that side of personality. All human personalities are interesting and I think it's great to have something that doesn't change and still be able to change and grow in your own ways

“multipinnata”

Rogue of Breath (Prospit)

“Probably”, so they say.

"I have to preface this by saying that I have taken this document completely to heart. I am also somewhat embarrassed about that. My overall opinion is heavily colored by point 1, and potentially(?) made more tolerable by point 2.

This is phenomenal for what it is (single-handed analysis of everyone* through the lens of Homestuck jargon). I don't agree with some of the more specific claims stated in this document (I also haven't fully read the later sections), but the overall framework of classes, aspects, & tiers has been incredibly useful to me in understanding why people act the way they do. Specifically, it's kind of a fear-queller - "good" and "bad" are a lot more subjective than people make it out to be, and everyone has very different belief systems that exhibit that. There is always a reason for why people do the things they do, and with this document, you sure can armchair-diagnose everyone with those reasons :) best explanation of classpects as applied to real people, hands-down"

The Daylights **Priest of Heart (Derse)**

Or Mind, possibly. They're not sure.

Is this document right about me? Who knows. It certainly did resonate with me. It described that gnawing emptiness like nothing else. It challenged me to take a long look at my relationships with others, and with myself. At the bare minimum, I reconnected with some friends and learned to be a little more patient with myself. Maybe I should trust my friends when they say they like me. It cuts, but is not cruel. It asks you to look inside yourself and all the little details you won't admit. It may feel like it shows nothing but despair, but the truth is that it offers hope. You just have to be willing to reach out and grasp it. And as for the priest class, I realized something. At least personally: That hole inside myself? It's not a hole. It's a tear. So I need to stop trying to fill it. I need to stitch it closed, and so far it seems like the best thread is accepting the parts of myself I'm rejecting and trusting my friends.

JetSetJojo **Priest of Mind (Derse)**

This one is sure.

"While there are certainly imperfections to be had with any personality system, ESPECIALLY one based off a fuckin' webcomic (including but not limited to: being made from white western perspective, including extra classes not in the original text (though, to be fair, they're less "AND I'M MOST SPECIAL OF THE SPECIAL BOYS" and more "I didn't think it was possible to be this broken, but here we are"), and some other flaws that I'm probably not privy to), I think there's something to be said about one that focuses less on general traits that can be interpreted in a million different ways and instead zeroes in on trauma and the response to it. Whether or not it's 100% accurate (I don't know and therefore won't claim as such), it's certainly more likely that recognizing something you don't like about yourself will land closer to the truth than picking and choosing things you do like or wish you were. I certainly recognize myself in the chronic emptiness of the Priest more than the INFP (even if I do still recognize myself as such). Of course, it could all be a load of bullshit, but I still question whether or not I'm real sometimes, so who am I to say whether or not this is all horseshit? Regardless, it helped me be more cognizant of certain issues I hold, so maybe it could help you?"

"Fell"
20 (Born 2004)
Witch of Void

This brochure, when I first read it, felt like a punch to the face. It flipped me the bird and then squeezed my heart -- but it didn't laugh at me, and though I can see how some may read it as demeaning, at the end of the day I mostly felt seen. Dewdrop gave something to witches I'd been searching for fruitlessly in others' descriptions of pages -- acknowledging the mask was like ripping off a bandaid I hadn't known I'd been wearing. The information presented is sober and fresh on all counts, and though I could not agree with everything written, I would still consider it strongly argued and well structured. If nothing else, it is an engaging read that will make you reconsider your positions -- I do not know a person who could come out the other side of these 189 pages having felt nothing at all.

Such thorough work deserves to be regarded with the appreciation it deserves.

Saki

23 (Born July 2001)

Lady of Light (Derse)

She agreed with 'Lady' when she wrote this. To my face, anyways.

Life is one of those things that you can't predict no matter how hard you try; I sure as hell couldn't, but it took me forever to realize it. It was a fluke that I even found this document in the first place, and because of that, my whole life has improved drastically. Identity is something I've always been interested and frustrated with in equal measure, and I have had many sleepless nights agonizing myself over it. I suck at self analysis; the fact that I don't like sitting with my feelings long propagates it to be sure. This brochure has helped me immensely, and even if there are things I may disagree with, the gut punch is what did it for me. My whole life I have bulldozed through every obstacle and kept trucking along cause I had no other ideas on how to go about anything besides facing the music; and I have done many, many things I am not proud of. I hope others who read this who align with me can understand that through all the pain and the sadness, there is always another path for you to take. You can change, you can build yourself up however you want. If something in here resonates with you, take that feeling and hold onto it. Learn and grow from it. We only have so much time in this life before we become part of the ground we walk over. Let's make it fucking count!!!

P.S. I can and will beat a Muse in a fight, watch me ;3

smu6

Knight of Hope (Prospit)

I think this document feels, special. I can feel the soul, the heart, and the care within every letter, word and paragraph like I was there when it was written. It's good, it's fun, it makes you go "Damn..." MULTIPLE times. If you like classpecting, this is definitely a good and interesting read. It took me years to figure out what mine was, and in a way, this document helped me go "Yup, this is it, this is me". I'm not that good with words but I'd still like to share this, at the very least

"Cyllyry"

22 (November 27, 2002)

Lord of Breath (Derse) (like Caliborn if he grew up a part of a social species and wasn't a dick)

I like this system. It maintains a cohesive image, rare for typology systems, as well as being a particularly interesting take on the patternistic nature of human thought and action. The primary problem with the brochure that I have identified is the polarizing nature of its words and descriptions, requiring a great deal of work and effort from its readers to see through the eyes of the author before being able to apply the system to oneself and others. One joke a friend and I came up with when trying to find myself in its pages when we were discussing Lord is how one of such a class would look like to a Page with as negative a view as what was being said. This ended up unironically helping in making the class click but also established that once you peered through the flavorful way people were being described, you find something quite remarkable, fun, and interesting. I cannot vouch for the veracity of the brochure as I currently understand it, but I can say it has my attention and excitement moving forward with its development.

"Erratic"

Thief of Void (Derse)

Archetypes and patterns go brrrrr. Is any of this real? Maybe. Clouds exist, the swirls are pretty. People like to see shapes in them. You can do something with that. If you're convinced you can't, I don't know how to help you. None of it's real anyway.

Just...there isn't going to be one thing that works for everyone ~~everything works for me, I'm just built different~~. That's fine. I respect the effort put in and what doesn't work for you might work for someone else. We're not all born with the same eyes and we might not even be looking at the same sky. The cages aren't real, it gets better.

"Яea"

Princess of Hope (Derse)

I've burned through pretty much every typological system in the past six years, and I have to say that Dew's is one of only two that have held up. I originally popped into classpecting because my best friend sparked my curiosity. I found it lacking, and pretty much gave up on Classpecting until he told me about the brochure. Dew has put a lot of work, and a lot of their soul, into creating their system, and it's paid off. The system identifies the mechanisms that drive certain types of people with stunning clarity, and is decent at linking the belief system and coping mechanism than any other system I've seen (enneagram can die mad). Prince has me dead to rights, and the description doesn't only call me out on my shit, but it helps me identify issues that I hadn't been able to admit to myself yet. More importantly, it helped me recognize just how much of the work I put into becoming a better, healthier person has payed off. Having struggled with incredibly intense emotions and the ever present impulse to self-sabotage, it's good to have my patterns put into writing, to have my internal experience codified and externalized in some way. The fact that someone else did it, before even meeting me, was something I found truly impressive. Speaking of, I'd like to thank Dew for having patience with my logical spiraling and minor blow outs, because I know that I can be a mercurial bitch. They are insightful, intelligent, kind, and just an all around good person in a way I don't see very often online.

A word of advice. If the system doesn't gel with you, (yes, you. I'm in your fucking walls. They are filled with termites and you need to call an exterminator.) then it doesn't. But if you want to sit down and read the damn thing, It might be able to help you the way it has helped me. Just be patient, be open minded, and prepare to get called the fuck out.

(But seriously, you need to get your house fumigated. You could spawn a horror franchise from what's metastasizing behind your drywall.)

Rose (aka "Pink Puppydog")

Seer of Heart (Prospit)

I never made a hard character limit rule on these things. Hell, had some trouble getting any of their syntax flourishes to work in this damn program...

I'm a little obsessed with the brochure. I got into it in 2025, clocked myself, and immediately gained a lot of insight into myself-something I'm extremely thankful for. It supercharged an obsession with studying people that I wasn't fully cognizant of. But I'll skip the rest of the praise. Dew's already heard it, and I have other things to address.

1: Emphasize the importance and definition of Attune/Adapt

It took me until Priests to actually figure out what the whole “x class is y class squared” thing actually meant. The graph is the skeleton of logic holding all of this together, and it’s the reason why I prefer these pairs to the confirmed canon pairs. It needs to be made very clear that, more than any descriptions, personality details or patterns, that graph is *what defines the classes*. I think the Brochure does explain all of these concepts, but I have seen people read the entire thing and not really get the “branches”. Maybe something like, a clear graph to refer back to, would help, perhaps.

2. Sex. ☹️ ☹️ ☹️ this emoticon is broken help

I went into the Brochure with an open mind that Dewdrop is not gender-biased in their testing of people, because I believe their theory has solid internal logic that does not rely on gender. If there was sexism poisoning the well of evidence they drew from, I think that would seep into their theory and make its logic faulty. I also believe that some people have a knee-jerk reaction against the Brochure for insinuating that sex-locked classes are possible. It’s understandable, but I believe anyone criticizing the Brochure should look at the theory itself first and foremost.

With that being said, I believe the terms “AMAB” and “AFAB” are being used incorrectly in the Brochure. Those terms were specifically created to highlight how biological sex is itself a social construct—that gender assignment is one specific action, done by a doctor, as a summary of traits rather than as a true physical binary. The more precise phrasing would be “biologically male/female,” but they also don’t have specific terms to define that other than vaguely gesturing towards chromosomes. I don’t blame Dew for this, because they’re not a licensed psychologist with the resources to test people. However, it does make their claim incomplete.

All I can say is that, despite the vagueness of terms, I haven't met a contradiction that I'm 100% sure about yet. I'm trying to stay impartial regardless. I hope everyone else stays open-minded too.

3. To Readers: Classpect how you want, and don't lose your mind trying to fit yourself in.

If you don't latch on to one class immediately, you're likely to bounce around between several. I've seen people get very frantic over this.

My advice to these people is to give it a rest. If you can't settle on a class, then focus on yourself, not on the classes. I use the Brochure as a tool for self-examination and self-improvement first and foremost, because that's the most value it has added to my life. That's far more important than fitting into one perfectly accurate box, in my eyes. That's all I've got. To other Seers: don't listen to Dewdrop's poetry, you're totally fit for crowns, and you can absolutely kick some overconfident Tier 4 ass when they least expect it.

"Mango Unit"
Knight of Time (Derse)

dont quote me jackass

-

If you'd like to leave your own remarks (averaged to the length of what you're seeing above, pretty please), contact me on discord: "dewdr0p". I'll still be trying to wrangle more feedback on my own, inbetween everything else going on in my life.

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SOME WORDS IN CLOSING

(WE'LL MEET AGAIN, DON'T KNOW WHERE, DON'T KNOW WHEN)

I've rewritten this section many, many times. I've had ideas on what I wanted the closing statement to be before I even finished writing all the classes - hell, before I discovered (rediscovered?) the bonus two. I've redone the whole thing from scratch, then tinkered further; ripped out chunks and forced new ones in amidst the rest. There's still work to be done, still things to polish, but every draft is one step closer to 1.0...though, most of that will just mean buckling down and finishing the poetry sections. Someday, sure - when my spirit is back, someday.

Alot of the earlier epilogues were about my dad. It's hard for it not to be. Priest of Void, always giving you the reason you'd believe for the whim he wanted. I'm what he asked for - just, not what he wanted. I'm wimpy, I'm indecisive, but...there's just limits on how much one can justify reckless destruction, how much good you can make of it. He asked for rules. He always justified his hypocrisies with this illusion of structure, invented a method to the madness that kept changing. I listened, and I clearly heard something right - Page of Time, Rogue of Space, believe in violence and fight beliefs. I'm the sum of his excuses, as broken as his explanations, the mimicry of his posturing made genuine. Hell, my brother's still an Heir of Breath, what does that say?

I'm trying to define myself, and I've ended up with the words of someone who probably isn't that different. How much of these ideas do I own? How much do I *want* to own? I get so swept up in ideas of others, but I hate being pulled in so many directions at once when I can't find equilibrium - there's a truth in there, something solid, something Priests don't have. Even then, I've had my soul up for sale too often, and given myself over to people I shouldn't, trying to be everything *they* wanted. If I'm left to my own devices, my thoughts don't make sense even to me, and I don't even feel like I exist. There's just some middle ground there, where everything's bouncing around but I can take stock of what I'm trying to put together.

It's why the poetry is here. It's the only time I've ever written poetry. I've blanked, every other time, and freaked out. I can academically do a rhyming scheme, but it's cold and mathematical - it's not me. I recognize what's not me because there is a me, and most of that's best expressed in smashy violence poetry. I need that. It, and the whole style of the Brochure. The scattershot, the disembodiment, the depersonalization. That's me. I really do hope this helps people, but I need this for me too. I can't accomplish what I'm setting out to do if it's *not* me.

Look, Classpects aren't all we are - they're important, sure, but like mental disorders and physical disabilities, they're just things we live with. I think it makes more sense to romanticize them, because they're so often our mechanism *to* romance, you know? But with caution - not to such a degree that we don't recognize the burden. Just please understand, I meant everything I said. When we understand they're impulses, we can make them more; the more we understand they're subjective, the better we can "sell" other people on them.

Isn't that all life is? Negotiation? Or is that projection on my part? Am I wrong? We're surrounded by thinkpieces, advertisements, propoganda, literature, tombstones, all fighting each other on "What it's all about". It's a fight because you can win if someone agrees with you - apparently. If those are the terms, why are we fighting? If we can believe anything we want, why believe anything at all? Nihilism is its own metanarrative, as much as anything. A conclusion implies a problem, implies a process, implies *alot*. Why the hell do we keep overhypeing some "search for meaning"? What if there was an objective truth to life? Call it God, call it whatever - what if it *didn't* work for you? What if it made you uncomfortable, what if you weren't a part of it? Who the fuck decides anything? For the liars selling anything to get ahead,

what other narrative are they buying where it's worth it? Money and power? Who the fuck are you trying to impress?

We all have opinions, and reality is the only dream we all share without a choice. It's not everything, but it is the staging ground. It's where we meet people, where we share the new, where we argue around the inarguable. People bicker on materialism, spiritualism, everything that was and wasn't and could be and can never be allowed to be. Isn't there such a thing as balance? Can't we just make use of what we have instead of trying to decide what's "evil"? The opinions I've laced this document with are "be excellent to each other", "treat others the way you want to be treated", and "treat yourself the way you treat your friends". I am willing to stand by those, certainly to the friends I care about. I ain't going to take over the world with it, and I don't plan to. It is just not worth the hassle, and it doesn't solve anything.

Page projection as it might be, I still think people worry too much. Don't fall apart because someone doesn't agree with you, and don't fall apart yourself just because you might be wrong - not even a prideful thing, you could even be wrong about how bad you think you are. Don't run from the ugly. Don't run from pain, and suffering, and "uncomfortable" thoughts. We learn, we brace for it, we make a choice what we will or won't fight through, and who we'll fight for or against. There is always a choice, and we don't need some pretty idea of "objectivity" to back us up, when all it does is distract us from our responsibility. We choose what we believe, and without some "universal good", we're stuck trying to justify ourselves to the people we want to justify it to, and ourselves most of all. We are our own Gods. We can be good ones, and it's up to you to decide what that is. Certainly, at least, I can try and push you to not run from the happiness you're scared to accept, or screw people over in a way you'll feel guilty about later. That if we cannot accept the things we cannot change, we'd ever see someone else could; that if we don't accept the way things are, that we could ever notice what we actually *can* overpower.

At the risk of undercutting all these labels I just wrote a fucking novel arguing for...we're all mimics. We all take ideas from other people, and our Classpects are shared at our discretion; one (two-ish) bound, but a thousand traded. We hold onto wisdom from other mouths, and you can still feel the heat from when it burned in their hearts. Same with stories, same with old books, same with this dumb document. We don't need them *with* us to be a *part* of us, and that is a fact.

Face tomorrow unafraid.

Special Thanks:

My partner. With me through thick and thin, despite every worry I've had he shouldn't. Everytime I said it might be wiser not to. I'm always trying to do right by him. Trying to trust the me he says he sees.

Connor. You deserved a better big brother. I wish we were close like we used to be. I treasure that we're never as far away as I fear. I know you don't need to hear it, least of all from me, but, I'm proud of you.

That Witchy friend of mine. I wouldn't be who I am today without you. You keep me steady. You don't judge. All the world's problems become smaller. You're fun to be annoyed at.

The fellow classpectors I met in this stupid journey. I hope it's a science. If not, it's a fun sport to argue about.

Everyone who read this and shared it around. I never imagined I'd get this far. I'm glad my words have helped. Hell, if you hated it and mocked me for it, thank you too - you guys were some of the first to get this snowball going, and get it into the hands of people more curious.

The government of Canada. I literally wouldn't be alive without disability money. I wish we'd stop fucking with the natives and the Quebecois, but we're a funny little tundra of misfits, at least.

The friends who stuck by me.

The friends that didn't. I do still think about the good times, every so often.

The friends I didn't stick by. Maybe I was right, maybe I wasn't. Maybe it doesn't matter. I still think about the good times anyways. I may as well.

The Block; punks, addicts, bohemians. Every day another stranger with a story walking through the door. Tobacco smoke, graffiti, kareoke. I still miss it. The Brochure started there; a blast furnace of drugged-up would-be phillosophers from every part of Canada, humouring my stream of nerd questions. None of this would've happened without you. God I hope most of you aren't dead.

Noah Caldwell Gervais. You will *never* read this, but your way with words was really inspiring to me - even though I doubt you'd be thrilled about how I use mine.

r/althomestuck, who took me after the main sub banned me. Well, I should say, "didn't bother to also ban me". I like the shitposts. I probably need the humility of posting next to them.

Andrew Hussie. Everything I've done here, and everything that comes from it, would be impossible without you. You're owed respect - no more, no less.

The artists who contributed to Homestuck, alongside the franchise's games, albums, unofficial albums, fanart, and every niche between. Everything Andrew Hussie did, and everything that came of it, would be impossible without you. You all deserve a heap of respect...and, probably better working conditions.

In fact, fuck it: special thanks to Karl Marx

Carl Jung. Reluctantly.

And finally: the girl who introduced me to Homestuck. I wonder if you'll ever read this, and contemplate your role to play in all this. I hope, if it does, it finds you well. I hope everything worked out.